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"I LOOKED UP AND SAW THE CRIPPLE,"

(See page 249.)

The Cripple at the Mill.

BY MAX PEMBERTON.



THE thunderstorm, which had followed me all the afternoon, promised to burst about the hour of sunset. Away to the west, the rolling vapours steamed up in fantastic shapes; there were mountains of sullen black cloud lying low in the remoter valley. The river itself took the colour of ink; the distant woods upon which the sun still fell were all lit with rich and changing colours, in fine contrast to the black and gloomy picture so near to me. I began to hear that distinct throb of the little waves which is a prelude to storm; the wind whistled hauntingly in the willows; the grasses bent to the fitful blasts; even my canoe went careering onward, as though anxious to bring me to shelter.

Supper and bed! The words had a pleasant ring for a man who was ten miles from anywhere. I had been making a tour of the rivers of France, and having come down the Seine to my great content, had struck through the canals into the River Loire. Thence I was looking to reach the Saone, and ultimately the Rhone. Until this June day of which I write, my trip had been all that I had hoped. The perpetual sunshine, the perfect rest, the exhilaration of the exercise, the solitude, the sweetness of the rivers, had blotted London from my memory. My old canoe, bought years ago at Toronto, had been my best friend. My luggage would not have filled a decent trunk. Two suits of thick flannels served all purposes. My *levée* dress was a mackintosh; my morning toilet, a sweater and a pipe. And I was happy; happy, I think, beyond any oarsman that ever cut himself adrift from his fellows, and made holiday alone.

Supper and bed! They seemed far off, indeed. I was ten leagues from Nevers, and the surrounding country was as flat as the Fens. Not the vestige of a house could I see.

It was now near to being quite dark. Ugly flashes of forked lightning struck across the western sky; the wind moaned warningly; there was foam upon the wavelets. With the hope that I might yet come upon a haven, I dug my paddle into the water furiously, and the rush of waves from my bows was like music to my ears. The greater speed carried me swiftly to the point where the stream swung round sharply to the eastward. I passed a great clump of bushes, all covered with wild clematis, and then I saw the girl.

A prettier apparition never was. She sat upon the bank, weaving white moon-daisies into her hair, which fell over her shoulders almost to her waist. She wore no shoes or stockings, and, for the matter of that, her feet were in the water to her ankles. What her age was I make no pretence to tell. I remember only that her exceedingly well-shaped face and great dark eyes gave me the notion that she was very young, and her dress was fittingly picturesque, consisting only of a short skirt of scarlet, and an old black and gold bodice with white sleeves such as we look for with the typical gipsy of opera. Her feathers, however, had long since lost their fineness. The gold-lace was wofully faded; the sleeves were scrupulously white, but much torn; there were buttons wanting. None the less was the effect singularly pleasing, and the face of the girl one to attract apart from her environment.

The moment she saw my canoe, this wild creature ceased to play with the daisies in her lap, and began to stare at me. Not a muscle did she move; not a word escaped her. But her eyes were a wonder to see, and the little hands were dainty enough to call for a painter's admiration. I paused for a moment, silent in praise. Then I spoke to her with all the French I could muster.

"I am caught by the storm, little one; can you direct me to any shelter?"

She looked at me with increasing amazement, but gave me no answer. I might have been addressing a statue. I threw a franc to her. It fell almost upon her right hand, but she made no motion to pick it up; nor did she look at it, continuing instead to search me with those lustrous eyes of hers.

"There is no house here," said she, speaking at last with a very pleasant voice.

"But where do you live?" I persisted, in surprise.

"I live at the White Mill," she answered, unconcernedly.

"And where is the White Mill?"

"What eyes you have," she now cried, gaily; "the White Mill is through the trees there."

I must have been blind. When I looked for the spot she indicated, I saw the shape of a tumble-down structure showing through the trees of a scanty copse. It was not half a mile from where I was.

"Oh," said I, at the discovery; "that's where you live, is it? And is your mother there?"



"‘YOU WISH TO GO TO THE MILL?’ SHE ASKED."

She shook her head.

"Or your father?"

She answered me as before.

"Then who takes care of you?" I asked, angry at her obstinacy.

"My uncle, Maître Chalot."

"Then he will give me a bed. Sapristi, the rain is coming down already. We shall be drenched, little one. Run on and tell your uncle I am about to make his acquaintance."

She did not move; but the look of amused curiosity in her eyes passed to one of startled surprise.

"You wish to go to the mill?" she asked.

"Certainly, I wish to go; why should I not?"

"Because," she answered, slowly, "because—no one goes to Maître Chalot."

"Then all the more reason to give him company."

"Oh! but—but——"

"But what, pretty child?"

She had now started to her feet, and had snatched up the franc, which she slipped into the breast of the faded bodice. I thought for a moment that she was going to plead with me; but when she had stood for some time with the wild look in her eyes, of a sudden she ran away swiftly towards the old house, and I was alone.

"A pest on it," said I, "the little witch is mad."

Mad or sane, it was not a situation to call for serious debate. Wild gusts of wind now howled in the valley. A heavy darkness had come down with the storm. The rain and hail cut the face. The willows bent like whips. The lightning leaped from cloud to cloud in paths of blinding light. The rattle of the thunder was like the roar of unnumbered batteries. Determined to find a haven at any cost, and sublimely indifferent to the relations between Maître Chalot and

his neighbours, I set down to my work, and, wet and weary as I was, the canoe flew onward to the mill.

The house proved on better acquaintance to be just as decrepit and decayed as I had thought when first I saw it. Scarce a pane in any lattice was uncracked. The thatch struggled raggedly over the eaves. One wing of the building had sunk upon its foundations and yawed away from its fellow. The high chimney above the mill had long since had a quarrel with the perpendicular. The walls were often bulging and split. The door of the parlour—for there was no such luxury as a hall—had lost a hinge. A mangy dog of all known breeds lay asleep on a heap of dirty straw in the yard. I saw that the place was built upon the bank of a little stream here flowing swiftly into the main river; and must once have been a prosperous mill. But that, I judged, was years ago.

I left my canoe in the mill-pool, then whipped into ripples by the storm; and, regardless of the fact that water streamed out of my flannels, I knocked upon the open door of the kitchen. There was a fire burning brightly in a stove, and stew-pans warming on the copper top. The whole interior was ridiculously clean for such an environment, and in spite of the warnings of the little witch, I began to congratulate myself upon

the adventure. In the same moment I heard someone hobbling across the flags, and then was face to face with Maitre Chalot. I was sure it was he, and at the first view of him I saw that he was a cripple, and went on crutches.

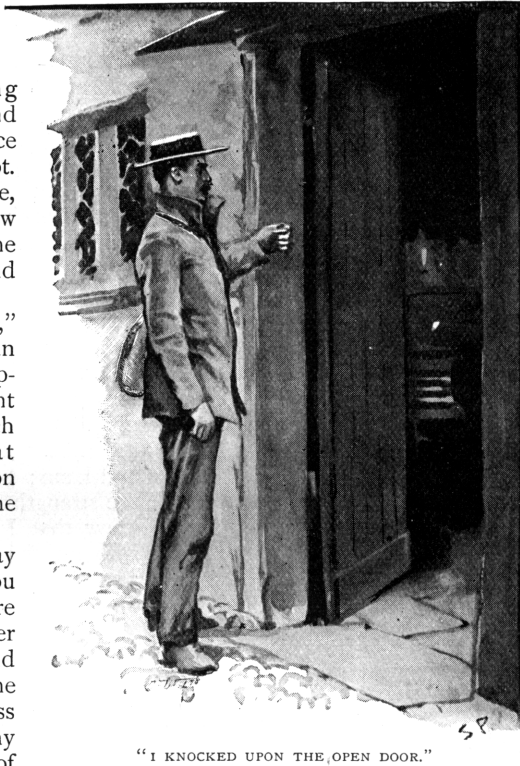
"Good evening," said he. "You are an Englishman, I suppose, and you want shelter? Well, such as I have is at your disposal. Mon Dieu, listen to the thunder."

He led the way into his cottage—you could not call it more—without another word; and I found myself sitting at the fire in a hopeless endeavour to dry my clothes. The witch of the river was not to be seen, however, and the storm now beat so violently without, and the darkness was so intense, that the old man hobbled to a cupboard and set a lamp upon his table. The light of it added to my surprise. It showed me the features of one who might well have been an abbé. Never had I seen such a gentle-looking old fellow. Silky white hair streamed upon his forehead; his face was the face of a Greek; his mouth like the mouth of a tender woman; his eyes kindly; his voice gentle. And this was the man of whom the neighbours made a hermit, and against whom my little friend had suggested cautions. What a farce!

When he had placed the lamp upon the table, Maitre Chalot made haste to apologize for his shortcomings and to set supper.

"I have nothing but bread and wine to offer, monsieur," said he, hobbling about upon his crutches with surprising agility; "but such as I have, I give with all my heart. It was different when my wife was alive—but she died ten years ago. And there is no woman's hand in this house now. God be merciful to me, I am quite alone!"

"One moment," said I, feeling myself moved to pity at his obvious distress. "I met



a young girl on the river's bank half a mile from here. She declared she was your niece!"

When I said this, a swift look of hatred passed over his striking face. He brought down his fist with a bang upon the table so that the glasses he had set danced again.

"My niece she is," cried he, "and with such am I visited for my sins. Oh, she is a lazy creature, monsieur—she is a waif and stray who will come to mischief. Heaven forgive me for saying it. Never was good known of her. She will not go to school; she will not work at home. She is a plague to me. Even the clergy speak of her from the pulpit, saying, 'Be

warned by Fifine of the mill.' What a misfortune for you to speak with her."

I said nothing in answer to his appeal; but his words seemed to be confirmed by the absence of the girl when we sat down to his poor supper, and afterwards to pipes in the settle. The crisis of the storm had now passed, but the wind still howled dismally in the river valley, and roared under the eaves of the old house with a sound as of human moaning and distress. Yet not a sight of the girl had I seen, and I began to be anxious about her.

"Tell me," said I, filling my glass with the revoltingly sour Bordeaux he offered to me, "where is Fifine now?"

"God knows," cried he, "everywhere—anywhere. She is like a Will-o'-the-wisp. Do not trouble your head about her. I never do—she is not worth a thought."

He turned the subject deftly, going on to tell me that others of my own countrymen had passed down the Loire recently, seeking to reach the Saone, and that two of them had stayed in his house.

"You English," said he, "how gay you are. To row about in boats no bigger than that—oh, it is droll. And not to care if you have

a pillow for your head or a dinner to eat! *Ma foi!* what a nation!"

He laughed at the humour of the thing, and poured me out another glass of the sour wine. He was just about to resume the subject when we both heard a heavy, dull

I knew not what to think, what to say in answer to him. I could have sworn that I had heard a child cry out; and yet here was this smiling old cripple appearing to be the spirit of all benevolence and good. The thing was becoming a mystery. I recalled

again the pitiful, dazed look of the girl; I remembered her startled exclamation when I had proposed to go to the mill. And I could not drive it out of my mind that I was quite alone with this saintly cripple; that there was no other house within many miles of his. These things, I say, occurred to me, and yet it is not to be thought that I feared the man. After all, he was old and lame; I was young, and had the strength of perfect health. I knew that I could take him up with one hand, if need be, and pitch him out of his own window. Nevertheless, a certain indefinable sense of dread came upon me once or twice while I sat in that gloomy kitchen. The dim light casting bands of black shadow upon the damp-stained wall; the sob of the wind about the gables; the reddening fire glowing upon the face of my host; the tick of the clock so plainly to be heard; the knowledge of the loneliness of the marshes without, contributed to the impression. I began to feel that the very atmosphere of the room was oppressive; the



"HE POURED ME OUT ANOTHER GLASS OF THE SOUR WINE."

sound as of hammering, a sound which appeared to come from a room next to our own; and at this he sprang up upon his crutches and hobbled away to listen. In the minute that I was alone I heard a sharp cry like the cry of a girl who had been struck, but it was not repeated, and when the old man came back to me he was still smiling.

"What a night," said he, apparently in explanation; "what a wind! Did you hear the dog yelping? I have shut him in the cellar. Holy Mother, I would not turn a cur away in such a storm."

"Then what about your niece?" asked I, beginning to feel some slight distrust of him in spite of myself.

"She is in bed," said he, looking at me sharply. "Oh, never fear, she can take care of herself. If anyone suffers, it will not be Fifiene."

company of the man unbearable. Talk as much as he might, I could not find it in me to reply to him; and nine o'clock had scarce been struck upon his crazy old clock when I said that I would go to bed.

He found the suggestion a good one.

"Without doubt, you have come far and are tired," said he. "I am distressed to offer you such a poor bed, but it is my best. It was different when my wife lived. Oh, monsieur, what a woman she was. So clean, so neat—such an example. God rest her soul."

As he said this, he produced a tiny brass lamp and lit it. Then he held it aloft and began, very dexterously, to pitch himself forward upon his crutches, leading me down a dark passage towards the yawning gable. He went so fast that I was some paces behind him as he reached the angle of the passage,

and in this moment I was conscious of a light step behind me. I turned quickly, and found myself almost touching the face of the girl Fifine. But the look in her eyes was one I shall never forget.

"Well, pretty child," said I, in a whisper, "what do you want?"

"I—I want to tell you," she said, gasping for her breath—"don't go—don't sleep—you were kind to me. Oh, don't listen to him. He will——"

What more she would have said I can't for the life of me tell, for that moment the old man called out, and she vanished like a sunbeam.

The passage was now quite dark, save for a ray of moonlight which fell through a tiny lattice high above me; and with the girl's words ringing unpleasantly in my ears, I began to grope my way back to the kitchen. There, at any rate, I could see the danger that menaced me. But in that dark place I knew not what might come. A hundred fears, a hundred possibilities, leapt into my mind. Uncertain, half-convinced, puzzling still upon the enigma, I had taken half-a-dozen steps towards the room I had left, when the light of the man's lantern flashed again at the far end of the passage, and he called to me:—

"Your room is quite ready, monsieur."

He stood waving the light, and I, in turn, paused and looked at him. For the thought had come to me suddenly: what if the girl should have been set to this work; what if it was her design to drag me back to the kitchen? I asked myself: were there other men in the house beside the cripple? What was the sound of hammering I had heard. Why had someone cried out? It seemed to me even in the face of the child's warning that I should fare better if I kept my fears to myself and did not come openly to a statement of them. That would give me time at any rate, and I could look but to my own wits for the rest. As well might a man have cried out for help in the cellars of the Inquisition as in that lonely house.

"This way, monsieur; *peste*, how dark it is, but there are no steps. Permit me to go first with the lantern."

With these words the cripple raised the light so high that its rays were cast upon my face. To have hesitated longer would have been to have brought the thing immediately to a head. Had I known what I know now, I would have taken this course; but in my uncertainty, I thought it better to follow him, and keeping at his heels, I turned the angle of the passage and came to my bedroom. It

was a small panelled apartment, with so tiny a window that a dog scarce could have entered through it. A low and very plain iron bedstead, a worn and tattered mat, a tin washstand, and a big deal cupboard furnished it. The place was both bare and dirty, and smelt strongly of damp. A shudder ran through me when the man set down the lamp and again began to apologize for putting me in such a place. But I was anxious to be quit of him; and with a curt word, I sent him about his business.

Directly I was alone, I seemed able to breathe again. How it was I know not, but the very company of that lame man set all my nerves twitching. Now, however, I was rid of him, and scarce had his step died away in the passage before I was at work. Instinctively, I felt that my very life depended upon what I could do in the next ten minutes. As a first thought I turned to the door and examined it. It wanted both lock and key; in fact, it swung loose upon its hinges and was worth no more than a door of paper. The idea that I would bar it with the heavy wardrobe was entertained for a moment, only to be rejected as quickly. Two men could not have moved that cumbrous contrivance; and when I had assured myself of this, I bethought me of the bed. What if I drew the bed across the opening, and so slept with the knowledge that anyone passing into the room must pass over me? It was a good notion, but I put it aside when I remembered what a cabined den I was in. Better far to creep out to the river again—better anything than the gloom and chill and silence of that reeking chamber. And this at last I resolved to do, coming to believe, as I reasoned it out again, that the girl was my friend, the cripple my enemy.

Firm in this purpose, I pushed a chair against the door and sat upon the bed. I had taken off my coat in my endeavours to move the wardrobe, and now I sat in my shirt-sleeves, having first got my pocket-book which contained my money and thrust it into my belt. My knapsack lay upon the chair at the door, but I did not open it; meaning, when half an hour had gone, to crawl down the passage and make a bolt for it. For the first time in the history of my travels, I began to curse my folly in refusing to carry a revolver. Until that time I had laughed at those who did so, but I laughed no more. Nay, as I sat there, starting at every whisper of the wind and creak of the boards, I remembered that a pistol might

have saved my life—and for my life I knew that I must fight.

Ten minutes, perhaps, had passed of the half-hour which I had set myself, when the little lamp flickered and went out. The light that now came down from the lattice showed me that the storm had broken, and that the moon was struggling through the clouds. But for the most part, the room was in utter darkness. I could not see my hand before my face; I feared to move from my bed lest any trap should be set for me. Once I thought I heard the sound of dripping water; the howl of the dog in the yard struck up weird and chilling; but these done with, the old silence fell, a silence so profound that I could hear the ticking of my watch as it lay in the pocket of my coat. At last I determined to bear with it no longer, and, well or ill, to leave that dreadful vault. It was as if the whole place were filled with ugly shadows, with the spirits of the murdered dead who haunted it. The temptation to cry out was unbearable. I seemed to feel that a face looked into mine. That dead men come to life were breathing upon me with warm breath.

With my nerve thus shattered and my hands almost trembling, I snatched up my knapsack and my coat, and pulled the chair from the door. A stream of light flooded the room at the action, and I found myself, to my amazement, face to face with Maitre Chalot. So great was the surprise of it, to see him standing there with his lantern raised and his smiling face, that the words I would have spoken stuck upon my lips. Nor was he at all abashed by my confusion.

"A thousand pardons, monsieur," said he; "I am distressed beyond words to wake you, but I had forgotten to point out the other door in your room, which I beg you to avoid. It is an old affair, opening above the mill-wheel which once was the pride of this place. I beg of you let me show it, lest any mischance should befall you."

He gave me no time to say aye or no, and quite put off my guard, I watched him hobble across the room, and open a panel in the wall. A rush of noxious air streamed into the apartment as he did so, and his lamp came near to being extinguished.

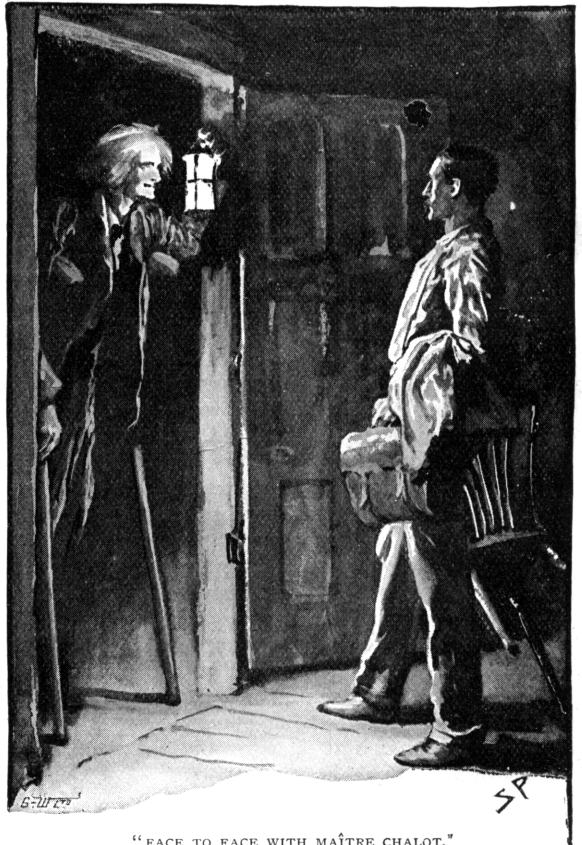
"Look for yourself, monsieur,"

said he, resting back upon his crutches, and waving the lamp with his hand, "what a dirty place it is. Oh, that I must ask you to sleep above such a thing. But what would you? I have no other room."

While he had been speaking I had taken two strides towards the hole. His words were fair; his attitude defied suspicion. A cripple, leaning back upon his crutches, with his hands above him: what harm could he do to me? I saw that he was helpless, but none the less I kept back from him, quelling the curiosity which would have led me to gaze into the pit.

"Will you not look, monsieur?" he asked again, when I hesitated. "It is the old mill-wheel, but the sluice runs no longer. Ah! what a place this was when the water made music all the day."

He said this, and the words were hardly out of his lips when the crisis came. I suppose that I had taken another step towards him, led on by his chatter. Be that as it may, while I was beginning to assure myself once more that he was honest, and that the



"FACE TO FACE WITH MAÎTRE CHALOT."

girl had lied, he astounded me by dropping back upon his crutches, and falling heavily to the floor. The lamp fell with him, extinguishing itself as it dropped. We were in utter darkness, and he lay at my feet, moaning most dismally.

"*Mon Dieu, monsieur,*" he now cried, "help me up, for pity's sake. I have broken my leg. Oh, what pain I suffer."

His cries were horrible, and without a thought of any treachery, I put out my hand to help him. No sooner had he gripped it, however, than a shudder ran over my body, and the whole of the man's purpose was revealed to me. For his grip was like a grip of iron; it crushed my hand until I thought that the fingers were broken; it threatened to pull my arm from its socket; the pain of it was agonizing. Struggle as I would, the cripple drew me down to him; I felt his breath warm upon my face; I could hear him gnashing his teeth in the struggle; the blows I rained upon his head might as well have been struck on a ball of stone; he had the strength of a maniac, the cruelty of a beast. And presently he had got both his arms around me, and I was pressed up against his chest, while his left hand fixed itself upon my throat and clutched me like a collar of steel.

Long minutes seemed to me in my agony to pass as the pair of us struggled on the floor of that horrible, vault-like chamber. Over and over we rolled; again and again he forced me towards the foul pit which the open door had revealed; again and again, with some terrible effort, I dragged him backward. At one moment lying beneath him gasping for my breath, seeing strange lights before my eyes, hearing the sound as of heavy wheels rolling in my ears, in the next I was above him, striking him with all my force, beating his face until I could feel the blood upon my hands. But he had the strength of ten men; his arms were like wire ropes; I knew that he was wearing me out. At the last, when he had fixed his teeth in my arm, and had almost blinded me with his nails, I dropped limp in his arms, and I remember only that he rolled me over and over, and that I fell with a low cry upon my lips into the darkness of the pit.

Weak as I was, the fall did not stun me. I had looked in the terrors of imagination to go straight down until I struck the filthy water he had called me to see; but I fell no more than five feet, and lay, gasping for my breath, upon that which appeared to be a

board covered with slime and mud. But the dread of the place was no less horrible; the conviction that I had not many minutes to live no less strong. Stinking odours of weed and ooze almost stifled me; the intolerable darkness was broken only by one ray of light which struggled through a gap in the slates high above me; the patter of rats in the slimy gutter was very plainly audible; I felt that I should die in the place; that my grave was to be there. The thought was an agony beyond anything I could conceive.

To tell all that I suffered as I lay in the darkness of that well—my strength gone, my face cut and bruised, my fingers crushed, my head on fire—is beyond any art of mine. I know only that I would have preferred death in any shape to the inconceivably repulsive suggestions of the pit; would have ended my life there and then had it been in my power. Minutes passed, and I was afraid even to move a hand lest I should roll from the place whereon I rested to the unknown dangers of the dark water below. The trickle of the stream as it swelled slowly through the tunnel, the sport and splash of the rats, the patter of rain upon the roof, were the only sounds I heard. The light was so faint that even the shape of the well was hidden from me. The silence in the room above was absolute.

How long I lay wondering where my body would be when day broke I shall never know. Hours seemed to pass and find me still upon that refuge. A dreamy sense, coming of weakness and the desire to sleep, crept over me. The scampering rats no longer set my brain burning. I was content to rest and wait for death. And in this new mood of my exhaustion I heard the trap above me open of a sudden, and the pit was lighted with a very blaze of light. I looked up and saw the cripple poised there upon his crutches, a flaming torch in his hand. For a minute he stood like some human vulture; his eyes outstanding, his face still bloody. Then he closed the trap with a snap, and I was alone with the darkness. But his torch had shown me where I lay, and the mystery of my prison was no longer hid from me.

I had fallen, as it proved, upon a palette of the mill-wheel itself, a wheel now shattered and broken and firmly jammed upon its axle. High above me was the sluice-gate, through the cracks of which the water dribbled; before me was a tunnel, leading as I surmised to the river. But all the walls around bore the slime of centuries upon

them; the water below me was like ink; fantastic masses of dirty weed hung from the wood of the wheel; the air was heavy with evil odours; and of possibility of escape I saw none. No acrobat could have scaled those slippery walls; or, scaling them, could have found any hole through which to drag his body. I had heard the cripple bolt and bar the trap; of other way, save the way of the tunnel, there was no sign. And I felt that sooner than face the horrors of that, I would die a hundred deaths.

It may be, if no other impulse had come, that I had carried out this intention of despair and remained lying upon the palette of the wheel until the end of it. It was only with a shudder that I could look down to the tunnel. The very suggestion that I should face it and risk all in an attempt to swim to the river chilled me to the marrow. And yet as the minutes went, the words, "That is your only hope," kept ringing in my head and would not be denied. I answered them with a low cry of mental pain; I prayed to God that death might come to me in any shape but this.

There was now a little more light in the pit. I knew that the dawn had broken, and fell to watching a ray of the sunshine which shone upon the dark pool. For many minutes I watched it in the determination that, whatever should be, I would think no more of the tunnel. The process became interesting, as little things will when great dangers press upon us. I observed the line of the water and the angle at which the beam fell. I looked again and, with a sudden overwhelming despair, I marked a change.

The water was rising in the pit!

With what eagerness I watched that line in the next ten minutes no pen may tell. Inch by inch, from brick to brick, the stream mounted. I saw the dark mass begin to swirl in the tunnel; the sound of rushing water struck upon my ears; the splash of the rats ceased. While the light became stronger minute by minute, and searched more deeply the recesses of the pool below, I beheld the rising line of the river as a man might behold the sword which presently is to strike him.

The water rose. It had touched my feet now. I felt it swilling about my ankles, cold and chilling. The eddies of the pool had almost become rapids. A murmur as of a subterranean river thundering grew louder every instant. The wheel shook and trembled so that I could scarce hold to it. Despair, fear of death, more than all fear of the tunnel, searched my very bones.

Though I knew that I must die, that many minutes could not pass before the filthy water choked me, nevertheless I clung to the wheel as though it were my only haven; clung to it while all around the current foamed, and the eddies swirled, and the air was damp with the spray; clung to it until, with a great crash and sound of tearing, it flung me from my hold, and I was sucked down into the pit with the river roaring in my ears and the darkness of the tunnel upon me.

Until this moment I do not think that any word but one had escaped me during all the intense mental suffering of the night; but I remember that as I fell from the wheel, a second loud cry, in which all my overwhelming misery seemed to find expression, burst from my lips. After that I almost lost consciousness, while the current hurled me headlong into the utter darkness of the tunnel. Now gasping for my breath, now plunged deep down, with the waters foaming over my face, now cut by the jagged stones, I was swept onward to the river—onward until my body struck heavily upon some obstacle, and I found myself, I know not how, with my hands upon an iron bar and my head above the water. For a moment I welcomed the support, clung to it as to life itself. Then, as the nature of it and its meaning made itself plain to my burning brain, I thought that here, indeed, was the crisis, here in truth the place of my death.

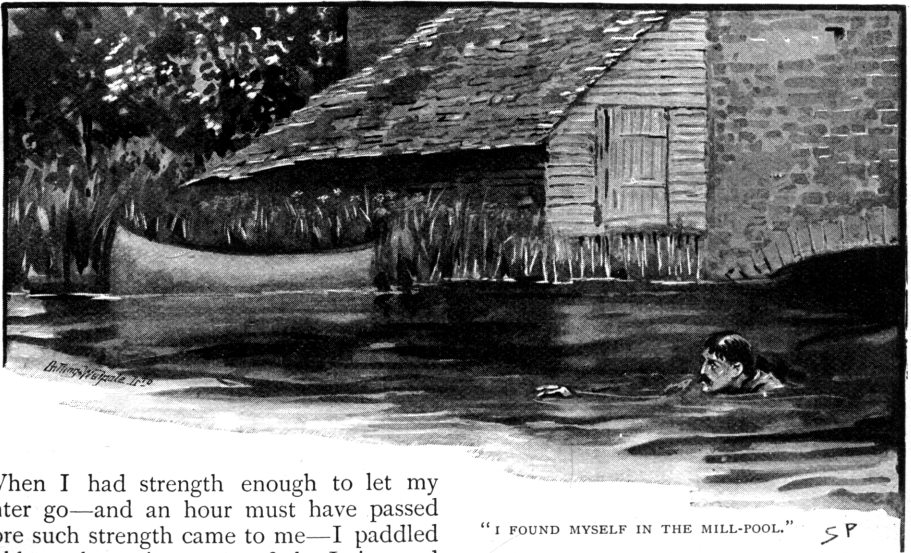
The tunnel was barred by an iron grating!

For what cause this obstacle was so placed, unless it was to prevent the mud silting up into the pool above, I do not pretend to know. But I can never forget the moments I spent beating upon it with my hands, tearing at its bars, feeling myself crushed by the weight of water upon me, fighting in very despair as a man will fight for his life. All around me the current thundered, flowing over my shoulders, running from my face, streaming from my hair. The spray went near to choking me again and again. The darkness was intense; the air fetid. I knew that I was to die, and yet my whole soul revolted against the thought that my grave should be there in that unspeakable pit. The very confinement, the vault-like arch of bricks; the sense of the utter hopelessness of my situation, only drove me to new efforts. I fought at the grating as at some human opponent who stood in my path; I pressed upon it until my arms were torn and bruised; I felt my strength ebbing, a horrid dizziness coming upon me; and still I held myself above the waters.

This growing weakness, the knowledge that moments scarce could pass before the end must come, awakened me to my supreme effort. I got my foot upon the tunnel's bed ; and with both hands gripping one of the bars, I drew myself back, having the design to throw all my weight upon the grating. To my inexpressible amazement, the bar, which would yield to no pressure *in the direction of the river*, came away in my hands as I forced myself back from it. The whole grating, rotting in its frame of brick, fell with the bar. The stream, gathering new force with the removal of the obstacle, now carried me forward like a match. The waters seethed and roared around me ; I was buried deep beneath them, dashed headlong against the slimy walls, hurled onward to the very depths of the vault. And then, in a moment, the scene passed. The inky blackness of the current changed to a golden green ; the roar of the stream passed from my ears ; I knew that the sun was shining above me ; I raised my arms and, striking upward, I found myself in the mill-pool, with my own canoe not ten yards from my hand.

I changed my flannels. Nothing, strange to say, had been touched of the few necessities I carried in the canoe, but the cripple had seized my pocket-book as we struggled together upon the floor, and I concluded that he had also my watch, unless it was that I had left it in the pit. But no money would have tempted me back to that house. The very thought of it chilled my blood and made my nerves quake. I had paddled a couple of miles, perhaps, and had come near to a little village lying hid in a pretty wood, when to my great surprise I saw the girl Fifine sitting upon the river's bank.

She was crying bitterly ; but when I would have spoken to her, she fled to the woods and was instantly lost to sight. It was only when many months had passed that I learnt from a neighbouring abbé how much I owed to her. She had broken the cog-wheels of the mill-slucice with a hammer, while I supped with Maitre Chalot, and so maimed them that the water but half-filled the tunnel. I owe it to her alone that I was not drowned like a dog. At Roanne, I wired to England for money, borrowing



When I had strength enough to let my painter go—and an hour must have passed before such strength came to me—I paddled quickly to the main stream of the Loire, and fled the White Mill as a man flees a pestilence. Not a sign of the cripple or of the girl, Fifine, could I see. Even the cur no longer howled upon the heap of dirty straw. A suggestive stillness reigned in all the house. It were as if no human thing had entered it for centuries.

Upon an island half a mile from the house

"I FOUND MYSELF IN THE MILL-POOL." SP

meanwhile of the priest, who heard my tale with little amazement.

"The man has long been suspected," said he ; "but what can we do ? He is probably on his way to Paris by this time."

Such an argument was quite unanswerable. The French police appreciated it—and did nothing.

NO. XLIII.—“THE NEW ROMEO AND JULIET.”

I.—ROMEO: MR. J. FORBES ROBERTSON.

BY HARRY HOW.



It has, for a long time past, been a mystery to many people why Mr. Forbes Robertson has not launched out as a manager on his own account. He has long been recognised as a very fine actor, and a man possessing gifts as great as they are varied. The time, however, seems to be now ripe.

Although I have met Forbes Robertson on several occasions, it was not until very recently that the enjoyable task was allotted to me of spending a day with him, and following him as he unfolded the pages of his artistic career.

Immediately you enter his house in Bedford Square, you are impressed with the fact that it is the abode of a man who loves his art. The finest and purest examples of etching and engraving decorate the entrance-hall and the walls of the staircase leading to his studio upstairs. The dining-room is entirely given up to family portraits, all painted by Forbes Robertson; for he was an exceedingly clever artist before he became an actor. Here hang portraits of his father and mother, his sister and his little niece, and his brothers. His brothers are able to cry out with Wordsworth, “We are seven,” for the new *Romeo* is the oldest of eight.

It is, however, in his study upstairs that one begins the better to breathe the man. The walls are covered with sketches and paintings done by himself: Miss Ellen Terry, painted in 1878; Miss Mary Anderson, to whose *Juliet* he played *Romeo*; and a striking canvas of Madame Modjeska, with whom he also played the youthful lover which Shakespeare drew.

Tubes of paint and innumerable brushes are scattered about on a delightfully untidy table near the easel, for the actor has not altogether forgotten his old love. He still finds recreation in the palette and brush, his hand has not altogether lost its cunning; for lying amongst a heap of papers were many ideas for costumes in the revival of “*Romeo and Juliet*” at the Lyceum. Mr. Robertson designed all the dresses himself. You will also find a design for the gold casket which was recently presented to Sir Henry Irving, by the actors and actresses of Great Britain, in token of the knighthood which was recently conferred upon him by Her Majesty. A huge case of golf clubs in a far corner speaks of the actor’s favourite pastime.

But what impresses the visitor most of all are the numberless little suggestions of the great respect which the actor has for religion. Tiny statuettes of saints fill up odd corners, and are set out along the mantelpiece. There are a dozen rosaries hanging up near a cabinet, whilst immediately over the mantelpiece hangs a crucifix; and not only is the

crucifix in the study alone, but it is to be found in many other rooms in the house; yet Forbes Robertson is not a Roman Catholic. I have special reason for referring to this, and the reason will be told in its proper place in this article.

Forbes Robertson sits down at his desk by the window. It is a gloriously bright day; and he opens the window to permit the singing of a hundred birds to be the better heard in the study. Indeed, my talk with the actor had for its accompaniment the sweetest of music; and the free notes of the tiny members of the feathered tribe



MR. FORBES ROBERTSON.

From a Copyright Photo. by George Newnes, Limited.

seemed to heighten the impression which one gained on looking quietly for a few moments at Forbes Robertson. He was engaged in turning over the pages of his diary. I lit a cigarette. One had only to contemplate the actor to realize the *Romeo*. His face is of a distinctly classical type, a little weary-looking, perhaps, at times, yet thoroughly manly and perfectly romantic. He possesses a magnificent voice, whether at the theatre or at home; though, in speaking to you in his study, whilst his voice maintains all its mellowness, it becomes gentler; but the fine tones are always there.

His life has been a very practical one, yet full of interest. When I sought to lead him on to refer to anything in which he was the hero, he played nervously with his hands and tried to evade the question. He is sincerely modest, and as he looks back upon his life he does so very quietly, and seems inclined to slur over those passages for which he should be given the highest acknowledgment, and seeks to give the credit to anybody but himself.

Forbes Robertson is a comparatively young man for the position which he now occupies. He was born in London on January 16th, 1853.

"I first went to a preparatory school," he said, as he lit a cigarette, "after which I went to the Charterhouse. The Charterhouse was then in the City. I did not come much into contact with the old fellows from whom Thackeray took his Colonel Newcome,

but I used to see them in chapel in their long black gowns, which used, in some degree, to fascinate me. You know, when one is a lad, one seldom thinks of the winter of life; but there was one old fellow there in my day with a long white beard and hair of pure silver, and a grand face, whom I could never look upon without becoming thoughtful. I am afraid, however, that the impression would quickly fade away after I had passed him about a dozen yards.

"Old Madison Morton was there—old Morton who wrote 'Box and Cox' and 'Done on Both Sides,' in which the irrepressible *Brownjohn* makes love to the fascinating *Lucy Whiffles*.

"Amongst my schoolfellows were a trio who have since become well-known actors, namely, Cyril Maude, Fred Kerr, and Charles Allan. A son of Leech, the caricaturist, was also there. He was exceedingly clever at pen-and-ink sketches, particularly at drawing horses. Poor fellow, he was drowned at sea in '75!

"No, I have never acted at school, though they had yearly theatricals."

It was at school, however, that young Robertson found that he had a love for drawing. Curiously enough, the drawing master's name was Robertson, too, and possibly this might have led the teacher to take a greater interest in the taught. Young Robertson would give up his half-holidays to play with the pencil. He was particularly fond of sitting in the old quarters of the ancient

Charterhouse, which dated back to the time before Henry VII. The architecture here was particularly attractive to the lad; he would sit and sketch within its precincts for hours.

He remained three years at the Charterhouse.

I was just lighting another cigarette, and, reaching to the mantel-piece for a match, for a moment I examined a beautiful rosary which was hanging near by. Forbes



From a]

THE STUDY.

[Photograph.

Robertson looked across at me, and smiling thoughtfully, said :—

"I suppose you are wondering, but you are quite mistaken!"

He crossed to the window and looked out for a moment or two. Then he sat down, and suddenly said, pointing again to the rosaries and the crucifix above the mantel-piece: "All those are the outcome of the happiest, and, if I may say so, the most beautiful, days of my life.

"When I was nine years old, and during my old Carthusian days, all my holidays were spent with an old priest near Rouen. His name was Victor Godfroi, the curé of Notre Dames de Bon-Secours and the builder of the magnificent church on the hill outside Rouen, of which he was curé for many years. I remember my father and mother taking me there, and I was invited by the old curé to go and lunch with him. I was very much impressed with him as he sat at the head of the great dining table, surrounded by brother priests. Indeed, I may say that the quiet and solemn way in which they said and did everything, in my youthful mind produced a feeling of awe, and when the curé asked me to come to lunch again the next day, I replied, quite nervously, 'Well, thank you, some other time.' But I soon found myself—almost frightened—entirely disappear under their gentle kindness. Here began the start of what was to influence my whole life. It was a most beautiful place, such a charming house in the midst of a most beautiful garden, along the gravelled paths of which the black-robed priests walked silently about.

"For five years I spent nearly half my time there, meeting hundreds of priests, and sketching the country and the church.

"I used to assist in the services of the church, and I have carried every sort of banner and cross, and swung the censers. I learnt to love M. le Curé de Bon-Secours; he was almost a saint; he spent nearly all

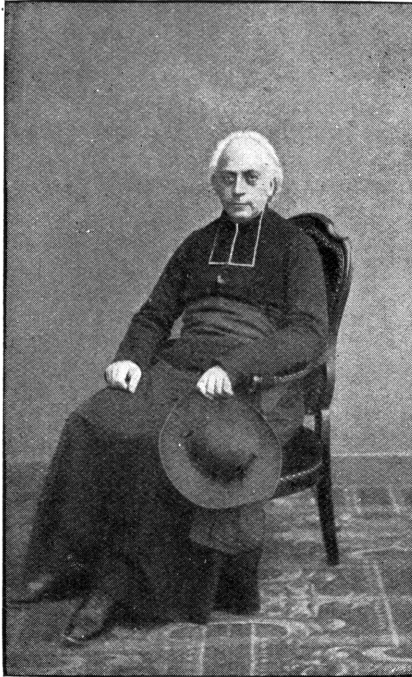
his money on the church, and I was never happier than when with him. I once had an idea to fast as he did before mass. I did; and, unfortunately, when kneeling, about half way through the service, I fainted. The nuns took me out and asked me if I wanted anything to eat. They gave me food, and I fear I must admit that I never fasted again!

"I wish I could possibly describe to you what a great advantage all this was to me. I found the life led by these people so thorough and sincere. I grew to be very fond of them; and to give you some idea of how it influenced my after-life, I sent two of my sisters to this place, where there was a very fine girls' school kept by nuns, and they became Catholics. Yet through all these years the old priest never asked me to become a Catholic, though the Archbishop of Rouen once sent for me and asked: 'Are not your people afraid of your becoming a Catholic?'

"In my quiet moments my mind often goes back to those never-to-be-forgotten five years of perfect and simple pleasure.

"I remember one adventure we had there. A long, subterranean passage led from the presbytery to the church, and the servants used to bring me my robes, and I used to put them

on and walk through this near cut. One night I was awakened by a terrible noise. I jumped out of bed and opened my door, and there stood an old priest in a long overcoat, with a great pistol in his hand, crying out: 'There are robbers in the church!' On proceeding to a lower landing, I passed a number of other priests and men-servants who had been awakened at the alarm. We all formed a procession, armed with anything we could lay our hands on. We were certainly ready for the fray! When the servant who carried the lantern got to the cellars, he gave in, and turned back frightened. I do not want, in any way, to



M. LE CURÉ DE BON-SECOURS.
From a Photo. by Witz et Cie., Rouen.

pose as a youthful hero, but I took up the lantern and led the way. Up the passage we went. On emerging from it into the chapel, we saw the robbers cutting away at the



MADAME MODJESKA.
From a Painting by Mr. Forbes Robertson.

stained-glass windows, in order to gain an entry to rob the chapel. We gave chase, and a very muddled chase it was: old men, young men, with myself and the lantern in front, tumbling over one another, over pieces of timber, and I know not what. At last we had to give it up and retire. Next day a gendarme came along, and, as the leader of the party, severely cross-examined me as to whether I could give him any information. He filled up scores of pages of a huge note-book, measured foot-prints, and did everything else to seek a clue, but we never found the robbers.

"That was the only really exciting scene that occurred in the pages of my little history whilst there; save, perhaps, when the great scourge of cholera broke out. Everywhere you went you would meet a funeral procession, yet, strange to say, not a single one of the priests or myself caught the scourge.

"It was intended that I should become a painter," continued Mr. Robertson. "When sixteen I was sent to Hetherley's, in Newman Street, to make drawings with a view to becoming a student at the Royal Academy. I really wanted to become an artist—my father and mother's influence over me at this time was very considerable. I moved in

artistic circles, which was a great benefit to me; and both Madox Brown and Rossetti seemed to take a great interest in my work. I often used to go out to Rossetti's house at Chelsea, and take my drawings to him, and he would look at them and say very many encouraging things. He was one of the most sympathetic men I have ever met. I sat to him once for a figure of 'Love,' which appears in his picture of 'Dante's Dream,' now in Liverpool. He was a very eccentric man. I remember asking him once how he managed to get so many beautiful women into his pictures. His reply was as amusing as it was characteristic, 'Ah!' he said, 'I make a point of standing at the window on a wet day, and if I see a particularly pretty girl coming along, I go out into the street and explain that I am an artist; will she come in and sit to me? Sometimes she will, and sometimes she screams. Then there is nothing left for me to do but to run and shut the door quickly!' Poor Rossetti! I can see him now, very wild-looking, with his dark, sad face.

"I got into the Academy somewhere about 1870, and I came into contact with nearly every painter of note of that day. Here are some of my studies."

The actor took from a drawer beneath the desk a huge portfolio of sketches. One by



MISS ELLEN TERRY.
From a Painting by Mr. Forbes Robertson.

one we went through them, and I could not help noticing the almost tender way in which Forbes Robertson handled these artistic recollections of his early days. They were

mostly studies of figures; one in particular he drew my attention to. It was unfinished.

"Now, tell me, tell me," he said, quite excitedly, "what do you think of that head and shoulders?"

I told him I considered it perfect.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, apparently gratified, "I did not do it; Sir John Millais worked for twenty minutes on that head and shoulders, and that is why I have not finished the sketch.

"I came into contact with nearly every painter of note of that day: O'Neil, Pettie, Orchardson, Frith, Faed, E. M. Ward, Sant, Sir Frederick Leighton, Stacy Marks, and what very few people can say—poor Fred Walker. Walker always struck me as being more afraid of us than we of him. When I first got into the painting-room my easel was next to Sam Weller's, whose pictures are so well known through engravings. Charles Landseer was the curator in the Antique School; he was always very grave, and spoke little. We always thought that he composed his jokes when visiting the students. Tom Landseer was also with us. He was very deaf, and his want of memory would sometimes prevent him from hearing his own tone and remembering it, whilst at one moment he would talk very loud, and at another in a low whisper.

"They were very happy days at the Academy. Some of the students were typical ones; wearing the long, straight hair, which turned up at the ends and never curled, and the velvet jacket, and smoking long pipes. We were all going to be Presidents, we were perfectly satisfied about that! Well, I saw the failures there, too—men struggling on and on. There was one man who had been there thirty years, and when I left he was still working on, on, on!"

Amongst Mr. Robertson's fellow-students were Frank Dicksee, Alfred Gilbert, Waterhouse, and Hamo Thornycroft. The young men used to adjourn to a very favourite chop-house (Snow's). Now the Academy student has his regular club-house, and evening dress has supplanted the velvet coat. They were great singing and reciting days; the young students would adjourn to one of their homes, and singing and speeches would go up to the accompaniment of pipes and beer. Mr. Robertson was recognised as the actor, and he treated his audiences to such pieces as "The Raven," and what he now refers to as "other morbid things!" He frankly confesses that though he worked very hard he did not make painting pay, only selling three or four pictures a year. He received £5 for his first picture, and has had as much as £15 for a head. During the last year he was at the school he painted a few portraits. He remained at the Academy for three years.

It was the influence of the late Mr. W. G. Wills that was instrumental in securing Mr. Robertson his first theatrical engagement.

At the mention of Wills' name we could not help remembering what a fine painter, as

well as dramatist, he was, how thoroughly good-natured and Bohemian. We thought of his money-box, the famous receptacle for cash which he always kept at the disposal of anybody who was hard up. They had only to call at his house and help themselves.

Neither could we forget his tea-pot and cracked blue china cup. He invariably made his own tea; and we pictured him in his somewhat untidy studio in the neighbourhood of Earl's Court, watching it draw as he sat in his old dressing-gown and still more ancient smoking cap; and in imagination we looked again at his remarkable picture of "Ophelia."



MISS MARY ANDERSON.
From a Painting by Mr. Forbes Robertson.

It is told of this picture that someone went up to Mr. G. F. Watts, R.A., who was looking at it when the work was on exhibition, and asked: "Is that yours, Watts?"



"THE EARL OF LEICESTER" (Marie Stuart).
From a Photo. by Mayall, New Bond Street.

"No," replied the Royal Academician. "I wish to goodness it was!"

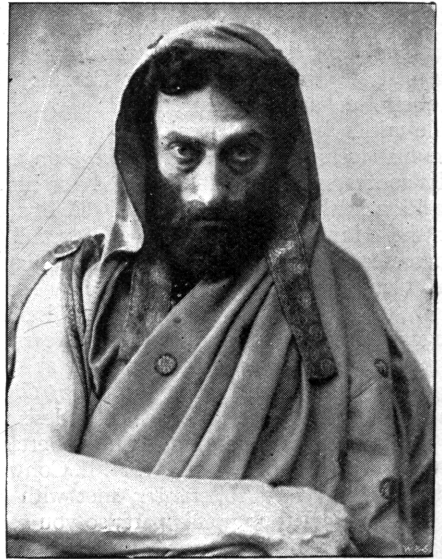
"I started at £4 a week," said the actor, "appearing in a good part at the Princess's Theatre, in 'Marie Stuart,' a play by Wills. Mrs. Rousby played the titular part. I remember leading her on to the stage on a white horse, and I thought it very fine. I need hardly tell you that all my fellow-students were there the first night; but I particularly requested them not to applaud, in case it might be mistaken for a claque. This engagement only lasted a few weeks, when I immediately joined a travelling company which had been organized by Charles Reade, and of which Miss Ellen Terry was a member. Reade was a very charming man; he gave me a commission to paint a picture, for I should tell you that I was still keeping up my painting. I was out with Reade for about five or six months, when I joined the stock company at Manchester to support Phelps—a company which included Fred Mervin, F. H. Macklin, and Charles Vandenhoff. Phelps as *Wolsey* was great. I played *Cromwell*.

"I have no hesitation in saying that Phelps practically taught me my business. Though it is generally considered that he was very blunt and sharp in his manner, I always found him most kind and encouraging;

though outwardly hard at heart, he was really the kindest man I ever met. He literally instructed me. He once came down to rehearse 'The School for Scandal,' in which he played *Sir Peter Teazle*. The lady who was to play *Lady Teazle* thought she was particularly grand in the part, and being a beginner she gave herself a good many airs. She persisted in making all manner of suggestions to Phelps as to where it would be best for him to stand in the scene, and where for her. Phelps accepted all these proposals very quietly. She kept these little ideas of hers going all through the rehearsal. At last Phelps's umbrella began to stamp on the stage. 'I think, Mr. Phelps,' she said, 'if you were to stand there —,' 'Madam, at night I shall be here; where *you* will be, God only knows!'"

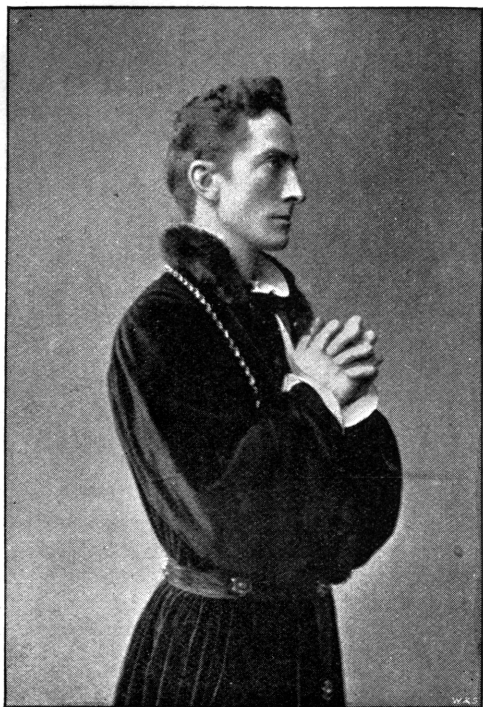
Mr. Robertson then went to the Gaiety, and appeared in a long series of the legitimate drama. The company included such names as Hermann Vezin, Arthur Cecil, Edward Righton, J. G. Taylor, John McClean, Mrs. John Wood, Miss Rose Leclercq, and Miss Furtado. An engagement followed at the Olympic, and Mr. Robertson appeared in "The Two Orphans" and "The Spendthrift," the latter a play by the late James Albery.

Mr. Robertson was exceedingly fortunate



"LEONTES" (Winter's Tale).
From a Photo. by the Cameron Studio, Mortimer Street, W.

in his engagements, playing in and out for four years every night without stopping. Engagements would end up on a Saturday



"BUCKINGHAM" (Henry VIII.).

From a Photo. by Window & Grove.

night, and on the following Monday he would be found at another house. It was hard work, but fine experience. During all this time Mr. Forbes Robertson never doubled a part. The first great impression he made was in a piece called "Coraine," by Robert Buchanan, produced at the Lyceum. The critics began to speak about him, and the managers to keep a watchful eye on him. His success in "Coraine" gained for him a position in the original cast of "Dan'l Druce" at the Haymarket in 1876—a play full of character, in which Hermann Vezin played the blacksmith, *Dan'l*, and old Henry Howe was still fulfilling a part of the longest engagement on record—forty-four years at one house! Then came work at the Olympic, and an appearance as *Count Orlof*, in "Diplomacy," at the Prince of Wales's.

"Oddly enough," continued Mr. Robertson, "the last week of the run, Mr. H. B. Conway, who played *Julian Beauclerc*, met with an accident, and I took up his part; so you see I played it in the original run, and have played it twice since. My first original leading part was *Sir Horace Welby*, in 'Forget-Me-Not,' in August, 1879."

Mr. Robertson then appeared in "Duty" at the Prince of Wales's, and subsequently

went to the Haymarket with Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, playing *Sergeant Jones* in "Ours," *Lord Glossmore* in "Money," and *Krux* in "School." Then came the first holiday the actor had had for four years.

"I went down to Cornwall," he said, "and there met, in the same little hotel where I stayed, Madame Modjeska, her husband, and sister. The Rev. Mr. Jackson, the rector of the place, persuaded Madame Modjeska to give two or three scenes from 'Romeo and Juliet.' She asked me if I would help her by appearing as *Romeo*. I did, and this was the first time I had appeared in the character. We rigged up a platform in the rectory garden, and this was really the beginning of pastoral plays. Someone sent a chatty paragraph about the performance to the *World*, and people evidently considered it a happy thought, and copied it.

"After my holiday, I returned once more to the Prince of Wales's Theatre, playing in 'Forget-Me-Not' and a Dutch piece called 'Annemine.' Madame Modjeska opened at the Court in 1880, and I supported her once more in 'Romeo and Juliet,' and in 'Adrienne Lecouvreur.' Modjeska was a very beautiful *Juliet*. I went on tour with her, and then to the Court to play *Claude Glenn* in 'The Parvenue.'



"LAUNCELOT" (King Arthur).

From a Photo. by Window & Grove.

"The year 1882 found me at the Lyceum as *Claudio* in 'Much Ado About Nothing.' I painted the church scene in Sir Henry Irving's brilliant production of Shakespeare's comedy. Once again I joined the Bancrofts at the Haymarket and appeared as *Lord Caryl* in 'Lords and Commons,' *Sir George Ormonde* in 'Peril,' *Captain Absolute* in 'The Rivals,' *Julian* in 'Diplomacy,' *Sir Charles Pommander* in 'Masks and Faces,' and assisted at the farewell performance of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft on July 20th, 1885."

The infinite variety of parts which Mr. Robertson had played, and his brilliant conception of them, had gained for him a firm footing on the stage. He was the recognised *Romeo*. Hence he toured with Miss Mary Anderson in America, playing the last-named part, together with *Ingomar*, *Pygmalion*, *Orlando*, and *Claude Melnotte*. After an engagement at the Opera Comique, in a series of Old English comedies, he appeared with Miss Mary Anderson again at the Lyceum as *Leontes* in "The Winter's Tale." He spoke the first lines as *Orlando* at the Shaftesbury Theatre, and appeared on the opening night at the Garrick Theatre in "The Profligate." His *Scarpia*, in "La Tosca," was a remarkably brilliant performance. He created *Captain Brandon* in "Dream Faces," and was in the original production of "Lady Bountiful." His rendering of *Buckingham* in "Henry VIII.," at the Lyceum, will not be readily forgotten by those who witnessed it. He remained at Sir Henry Irving's theatre for the run of the piece, and returned to the Garrick to play in "Robin Goodfellow," and in revivals of "Diplomacy," "Caste," and "Money." He was the original *Walter Forbes* in "Mrs. Lessingham." After touring with Miss Kate Rorke, he was engaged by Sir Henry Irving to create the part of *Launcelot* in

"King Arthur." To many minds this is the finest thing that Mr. Forbes Robertson has ever done. It was perfectly picturesque, perfectly romantic, yet perfectly natural. He had to return to the Garrick Theatre to appear as *Lucas Cleeve*, in the first performance of "The Notorious Mrs. Ebb-smith," and this was his last appearance previous to his producing "Romeo and Juliet" at the Lyceum.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Forbes Robertson is one of the quickest studies we have got. He believes in the early morning for studying parts, and has on several occasions become letter-perfect in the lines appertaining to a big character in two days.

It was just before leaving that I hinted that probably he had had one or two amusing experiences during his stage career. He had. He replied, merrily:—

"I am not likely, I think, to forget my experience at the Lyceum, and more funny incidents than those which happened on the first night have never, I believe, taken place on any stage. Of course I am speaking of a time when the theatre was not in Irving's hands. I can only tell you of two. The late Tom Meade (whom you remember was such a splendid ghost in 'Hamlet') was a

member of the company. In a certain play he knew very little of his part; in fact, I do not think he knew it at all. At his first entrance he completely stuck, and in order to assist himself, with a view to getting some idea of the words, he walked down with a tragic stride to the footlights and said, 'Ah! here I am!' but the words would not come, so he walked back again. Still he could not remember, so he proceeded to walk once more to the footlights; and, with even greater emphasis than before exclaimed, 'Here I am!' and somebody in the gallery cried out, 'All right, Tom; we see you are! Get on!' In one part of the play, where he is judging



"ROMEO" (Romeo and Juliet).
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.

someone who is brought up before him, in order to help himself to remember the text, he kept crying out : 'Oh, Paul !'—that was the name of the character—'Oh, Paul !' till at

last the exclamation : 'Oh, Paul !' became so frequent that someone in the audience exclaimed in a very audible whisper : 'Oh, Paul ! Paul, wherefore persecutest thou me?'"

II.—JULIET : MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL.

By M. GRIFFITH.



HE dramatic firmament of the present age is brilliant with stars of varying magnitude and power, foremost among them being Sarah Bernhardt, resplendent with the undying youth of genius, with her golden voice and serpent-like grace ; Eleanor Duse, small, pale-faced, but with dark, glorious eyes that would render the most commonplace woman irresistibly attractive ; quiet, and so natural in her acting, that we overlook the consummate art of which it is the result. Then Réjane, that mistress of comedy, arch, with an impudence that smacks of the boulevards, coquettish or shrewish, a woman of the people, full of strong devotion or deep tenderness, that keeps her audiences spellbound or sways them at will to smiles or tears. Modjeska, ever memorable as one of the sweetest of *Juliets*—girlish, or womanly, and dainty ; her foreign accent enhancing the beauty of her impersonation. And last, but not least, our latest discovered star—the new *Juliet*—the winsome, haunting Mrs. "Pat" Campbell.

It was to interview this actress that I one day recently wended my way to Ashley Gardens, which is known to be a flat-land of celebrities, numbering among its hundred tenants, lawyers, journalists, composers, politicians, officers, and one

actress. I remember seeing it stated in one journal that the "postal authorities" have a recognised formula for misdirected letters—"Gone away : try Ashley Gardens"—and it is a pretty sure find. However this may be, I was successful in finding out where Mrs. Patrick Campbell lived, and also in finding her at home. She received me most kindly, and seeing that I was *hors de combat* from a sprain of the right thumb, she very kindly said, "Let me write for you." For a moment I felt tempted to accept the offer, for what a novelty to the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE would have been an interview with Mrs. Patrick Campbell written by herself. But a little reflection convinced

me that the result, however interesting from its uniqueness, would be woefully meagre of its subject, for it is very difficult to get this clever lady to speak, much less to write, about herself.

"Are you really an Englishwoman?" was my first question.

"Yes, I think so," was the reply. "My father was English and my mother is an Italian ; I was born in Kensington, and, with the exception of a year in Paris in order to study French, and the time I have spent touring, I have lived entirely in London."

"What induced you to adopt the stage? Was it necessity or choice?"

"Choice and the love of hard work. My husband," said



MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL.

From a Photo. by Mayall, 73, Piccadilly.



THE DRAWING-ROOM.

From a Photo. by Kate Pragnell & Co., 164, Sloane Street, S.W.

Mrs. Patrick Campbell, "is of Scotch parentage, with a half Irish name, and soon after I was twenty-one he had to go abroad on business—and was away from me nearly seven years. Now I have told you my age," she added, laughingly.

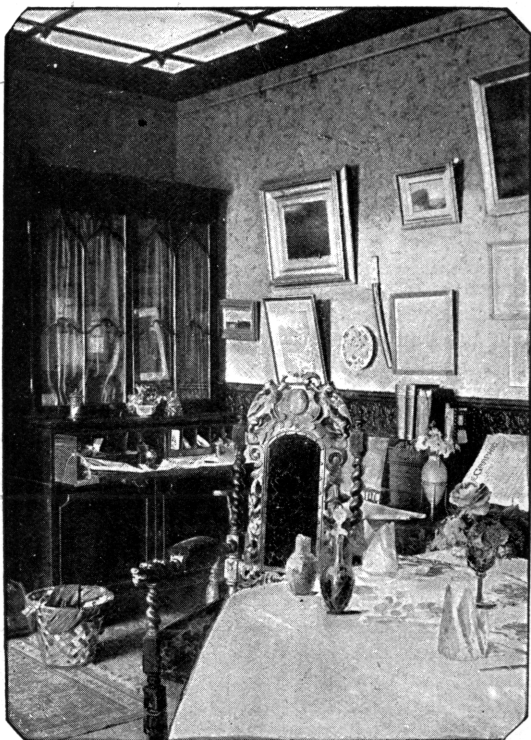
"Yes, but it was not very difficult to guess it from your appearance, although some of the too clever critics described you as a 'middle-aged beauty.'"

Mrs. Patrick Campbell went on to tell me how lonely she felt during the absence of her husband, and how much she longed for some steady work; at last she got a friend who knew Mr. J. H. Macklin to obtain from him a letter of introduction to Mr. Harrington Bailey, on whom she called, and having paid her guinea entered her name on his books. The result of this was a twelve weeks' touring engagement as *Mrs. Lynn Loseby*, the leading part in Messrs. Hermann Vezin and Robert Buchanan's play, "Bachelors." She understood her part so well and acted it so creditably, that she had no difficulty in getting other engagements.

I must explain that previous to this

she had gained some experience as a member of the Anomalies Amateur Dramatic Company, with which she had had opportunities of rehearsing and playing such parts as *Marie Graham*—originally created by Ada Cavendish—in Mark Quinton's "In His Power," and her first appearance as an amateur was when she played in this piece at Lower Norwood. Her other rôles at this time were *Alice Petherick*, in "Blow for Blow"; *Mirza*, in Gilbert's fairy comedy, "The Palace of Truth"; *Stella*, in "Buried Talent"; and *Millicent Boycott*, in the "Money Spinner."

Her first venture with the "Bachelor" company was at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, in November, 1888, and this was the first time she had ever played on a regular stage. The second engagement was with Mrs. Bandmann Palmer's "Tares" Company, in which she played the part of *Rachel Denison* (first played by Miss Sophie Eyre). The Press noticed the talent of the young actress in very strong terms; it was said to be "a splendid conception, and that she had proved herself an actress of exceptional



THE DINING-ROOM.

From a Photo. by Kate Pragnell & Co., 164, Sloane Street, S.W.

merit." When the tour was over, she joined Mr. Ben Greet and Miss Eweretta Lawrence, taking part in "Masks and Faces," "Adrienne Lecouvreur," "Kitty Clive," etc., and on her second tour with Mr. Greet she played lead in "Aladdin" and "The Hunchback." In the March of 1890 she had the joy of playing the latter part at a London theatre, for Mr. S. Hayes's annual *matinée* at the Adelphi Theatre, and, a little later, a *matinée* of "Buried Talent" was given at the Vaudeville, "Stella" being charmingly acted by Mrs. Patrick Campbell, being the opinion expressed of her performance in a leading paper.

The young actress's next experience was a three months' tour with Mr. Ben Greet's Pastoral Play Company. Her *repertoire* included *Helena* in "Midsummer Night's Dream," *Rosalind* in "As You Like it," *Eglamour* in "Love in a Mist," and *Stella* in "Buried Talent"; both these latter parts she created. The company were invited to give their performance of "As You Like It" at Wilton, the Earl and Countess of Pembroke's seat; it was a great success, and was repeated later at Ashridge, Great Berkhamstead, before the Earl and Countess Brownlow and many distinguished guests.

"No finer setting," said Mrs. Campbell, "for one of Shakespeare's masterpieces could be imagined than this fine park, overshadowed by grand old oaks, beeches, and elms, and carpeted with golden-tinted bracken; through the branches of the trees we occasionally caught sight of stately deer, and it was truly a lovely spot! Some of our supers on this occasion were gentlemen guests staying at Ashridge."

It was not difficult to picture the scene she described, and also to recall her *Rosalind*, for she played as one inspired, with a half arch, half pathetic coquetry, which was most bewitching. The

late Earl of Pembroke described her *Rosalind* as "the best he had ever seen—not excepting Ada Réhan, admirable as she was—marvellous for the truthfulness of the light passages, and marvellous in the pathetic parts."

The Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham, who had seen Mrs. Patrick Campbell in the pastoral plays at Wilton, encouraged her to give a *matinée* of "As You Like It" in London, so the Shaftesbury Theatre was rented for the occasion, and the performance given under the patronage of the Princess Christian, and a host of other representatives of rank and fashion. Mrs. Patrick Campbell looked handsomer than ever in her Grecian draperies of green and white, although many preferred her in the forest scene, in which she appeared in a tan leather jerkin, bordered with rich sable, the belt fastened by a finely cut steel buckle, the long soft boots, also tan; the rest of the dress being of emerald green velvet, with knots of rose colour. The success of this venture may be judged from the fact of her being immediately engaged by Messrs. Gatti for a new play which was about to be produced at the Adelphi, called "The Trumpet Call," by Messrs. Sims and Buchanan, and in this she played the part of *Astrea*, a picturesque

gipsy, strolling actress and singer, and it was a splendid test of the power and versatility of the actress.

Nearly all playgoers will remember the *contretemps* which occurred in one scene—the "Doss House"—which was sufficient to unnerve the most experienced actress. In the scene mentioned, Mrs. Patrick Campbell had to appear almost in rags, her skirt being of some thin black material with but scanty garments underneath. Owing to the carelessness of her dresser, the skirt became unfastened and dropped below her knees before she noticed it. Those who were



"ASTREA" (The Trumpet Call).
From a Photo. by Russell & Sons, Kensington.

present are never likely to forget the dignity and calm self-possession which she displayed in so trying a moment, nor the withering scorn of the glance she directed at one or two ill-bred persons who seemed to regard this mishap as an occasion for mirth. Gathering her dress quickly round her, she made her exit, and on her return played with more than her usual power and excellence.

"My next part," continued Mrs. Campbell, "was a great contrast to *Astrea*; it was *Elizabeth Cromwell*, in 'The White Rose,' a sweet, pathetic Puritan character. I next played *Tress Purvis* in 'The Lights of Home,' a fisherman's daughter; perhaps you remember it? After that came 'Black Domino,' in which I took the part of *Clarice Berton*. I created those four parts, all of which were studies of widely diverse characters. I ought to have mentioned that during the run of 'The Trumpet Call' I had a severe attack of typhoid fever, and was compelled to relinquish my engagement for six months, and my place was filled during my absence by Miss Claire Ivanova."

"Was it not while you were playing the part of *Clarice Berton* that Mr. Pinero saw you?"

"Yes, the death scene in the last act, I believe, impressed him; anyhow, I got the offer of the part of the *Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, but to my great disappointment the Messrs. Gatti refused to release me, and it was assigned to Miss Robins; but ultimately the management agreed to let me go, and when Miss Robins heard of it she resigned this grand part without a murmur. Was it not a noble and generous act?"

It is at this point that Mrs. Patrick Campbell's marvellous dramatic career really starts. For a young, comparatively inexperienced, actress to be chosen to create a new and most difficult rôle, in this masterpiece of modern plays—one which was intended by its author to convey the moral, "That we are punished through the good that is in us, not through the bad, and, to

prove his theory, that no man or woman is wholly good, or wholly bad"—was a signal, as soon as the cast was announced, for envious croakers to predict that the whole thing would be an ignominious failure. The result proved the wisdom of Mr. Pinero's choice.

When we recollect that a few years ago Mrs. Campbell was only the leading lady of a suburban amateur dramatic club, and that her whole stage experience only extends over a period of about five years, her present position goes far to prove that she has not yet attained the zenith of her artistic career, especially if we compare her rapid progress with that of the great Siddons, whose earliest appearance in London in 1775 was a failure, and who only achieved her first success after eight years' hard work in the provinces, on her reappearance in London in the year 1782.



From a Photo. by

"CLARICE BERTON" (Black Domino).

[Alfred Ellis.

"Do you not think that the long run of pieces, especially for an actor or an actress who creates a rôle and becomes identified with the character, is harmful to their artistic progress?"

"It is said so, and perhaps French actresses have the advantage of us in that; it does seem difficult to disentangle oneself at once from a part that has become second nature, and to take up another totally different. It is a sort of transmigration business, is it not?"

"The critics ought to have thought of that when you played *Dulcie Larondie* in 'The Masqueraders.'"

"Yes; to start with, the part was not a congenial one, and you know I played the *Second Mrs. Tanqueray* for three hundred nights without a break. It is difficult to



"DULCIE LARONDIE" (The Masqueraders).
From a Photo. by the London Stereoscopic Company.

dissociate oneself from such characters at once. Talking about critics, one of my tradesmen the other day, when my lady secretary went to his shop to purchase something, inquired very kindly after my health, and said, 'Tell Mrs. Campbell not to mind the critics: the tradespeople all like her.' He also sent me a bottle of tonic, which he said might do me good."

"What did you open with when you joined Mr. Tree at the Haymarket?"

"'John-a-Dreams,' in which I played *Kate Cloud*. I enjoy any part that is full of human interest. Then followed another of Mr. Pinero's, 'The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith,' which was a great success, and then I played *Fedora*."

"Have you any special liking for any particular rôle?"

"No, I like any part that is human," and Mrs. Campbell went on to say how kind and patient Mr. Pinero has been with her, and also spoke with great warmth of the thoughtful consideration with which she had been treated by both Mr. and Mrs. Tree. "This," she said, handing me a handsome silver ornament, "was given me with a bunch of orchids by Mrs. Tree on the first night of 'John-a-Dreams.' I forgot to tell you," she continued, "that when I was playing the *Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, and after I had

played it about a hundred times, one memorable evening, in the first act I quite forgot my part. My memory was a perfect blank, and no prompting availed me. I had at last to read my part all through the scene, but some who were in front said I had never played better."

Asked as to her future plans, Mrs. Campbell said that she was to have one of her dearest wishes fulfilled, and that was to play *Juliet*, Mr. Robertson being the *Romeo*. "That will be in September," she added, "and I am looking forward to it with great pleasure."

Mrs. Patrick Campbell looks much younger off the stage than she does on; she is tall, slender, and almost fragile-looking, with a very pale, delicate oval face, rendered more so by her dark hair and beautiful large eyes, both of which are inherited from her Italian mother. In temperament she is strongly emotional and highly nervous; the long, thin fingers seeming to have a language of their own, which is most expressive; her voice is low and very sweet, she speaks slowly, and the slight strange accent or intonation of some of her words is quaint and in keeping with her appearance. Taken altogether, her personality is very striking, and her style of dress is remarkable for its originality, her wardrobes being rich in the variety of the number of her gowns, which, in splendour of material and perfection of style, are unsurpassable.

The costume plays nearly as important a



"TRESS PURVISS" (The Lights of Home).
From a Photo. by Martin & Salinow.

part in making the audience understand and enter into the individuality of a character as does the acting itself, and Mrs. Campbell is as well up in the mysteries of successful dressing as is the great Sarah Bernhardt. She seems to have a special love for fur, passementerie, and lace, from the rich guipure to the cobwebby, snow-white *dentelle* that would grace Titania's dainty form. Two of her cloaks, garments which are generally supposed to be most prosaic, were of ideal elegance. One of tan-cloth, with bands and collar of beaver, was lined with the richest velvet, the colour of Parma violets; the other was of thick white silk, lined with turquoise silk, and bordered with glistening passementerie. A lovely gown was one, worn in "The Masqueraders," of pale rose-pink brocade, embroidered with sprays of silver fern leaves, the skirt looped up on the left side over a petticoat of glittering silver embroidery. The long train was of rose satin on which silver ferns seem to have been thrown, the bodice low and crossed, and completed by a bow with long ends of silver embroidery.

As *Paula*, Mrs. Campbell looked superb in a dress of sunset-coloured satin with a deep flounce, edged with a band of net covered with gold-fish-scale sequins, bodice and epaulettes similarly adorned, and full sleeves of net glistening with sequins. Over this handsome gown was worn a gorgeous cloak of yellow satin, embroidered with gold, the lining and collar being of emerald velvet; while yellow ostrich feathers bordered the latter, and were continued in boa fashion down the front. Another cloak worn in the same play was of gold and white satin brocade, the capes of wide gold lace.

In "Fedora" one dress is of cloth of gold, the slippers being made of the same rich material. No description can do justice to

such costumes, every one of which is the creation of an artist. I wish I could tell my women readers *what* artist; but, alas! Mrs. Campbell was deaf to all my adroit attempts at worming that secret out of her. Solomon in all his glory, or all the Indian Rajahs combined, could not surpass her in the splendour and beauty of her toilettes.

It is whispered that her *Juliet* gowns will set all London talking; but I have quite lost myself on the great dress question, and must return to matters of more general interest. I was introduced to two of Mrs. Patrick Campbell's pets, a stately and rather fat pug,

rejoicing in the name of "She," and her adopted daughter, a rollicking, boisterous puppy, named "Humpa Dincka."

I made a liberal selection of portraits, and signified my wish to have them.

"What, all these!" said Mrs. Campbell. "What can you do with them all?"

"They will interest the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE," I said, and received a smiling assent.

Rarely could one meet with a more charming study than the subject of the present article, for it is human nature to admire and respect those who, *quelque soit leur métier*, surpass anyone else in anything they undertake.

The drawing-room in which we had our chat was a sunny, pleasant room, the colouring being mostly blue and white with a large bow window and cosy couches and chairs, a piano, and the thousand and one dainty trifles which go far to show the character of its owner. A little table devoted to silver curios numbered among them Handel's snuff-box and shoe-buckles; an old spy-glass in a velvet case, believed to be his also, and many valuable gifts. Mrs. Campbell also collects and considers among her choicest treasures rare copies of books, several being Morris's beautiful Kelmscott edition, in overlapping bindings of white



"PAULA" TANQUERAY" (The Second Mrs. Tanqueray).
From a Photo. by Alfred Ellis.

vellum, tooled with gold, and tied with narrow green ribbon with gold tassels. An autograph album, a most exquisite example of the bookbinder's art, had been presented to her by the printers. A volume of poems, a gift from a well-known poet, bore the following dedication :—

TO MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL,

A tribute to her incomparable art, and to her incomparable personality.

The walls of the drawing-room were covered with sketches, photos., and engravings, several being copies of Burne-Jones's paintings; a sketch in water-colour of Mrs. Campbell was the work of her sister; another by Mr. Phil Burne-Jones, symbolic of her name *Stella*, represented her gazing longingly at the stars, while from below she herself was regarded as a star. Other sketches were Ellen Terry as *Ophelia*, by Watts; "The Amber Witch," "The Happy Warrior," and Duret's "Saint Joseph," all in quaint green frames with black beading. Some old carved oak, a grandfather's clock, brass mounted escritoire, and a few good specimens of Flemish pottery, odds and ends of brocade, flowers and palms, completed the decoration of this room.

Mrs. Campbell has two children—a boy and a girl. In addition to her talents as an actress, she is a delightful hostess, a good conversationalist, and an accomplished musician, as was noticed by those who saw her in "Mrs. Tanqueray," the fragments she then played being the composition of her brother, who is a very clever musician.

It may be interesting to learn the opinion expressed of Mrs. Patrick Campbell's talent by an actress whose name at least is known to everyone—Mrs. Crowe—the Miss

Bateman of "Leah" fame, whose father was at one time lessee of the Lyceum Theatre, and who introduced Mr. Irving to the London theatrical world. It is that she is "as great a genius as is now on the stage."

Another authority said: "Her creation of the part of the *Second Mrs. Tanqueray* would live in the history of dramatic triumphs." One of the most remarkable pictures in the Academy of last year was her portrait as *Paula Tanqueray*, by Mr. Solomon J. Solomon. It represented her as she appeared on the stage illumined by the upward glow from the foot-lights. The passionate expression of an unutterable anguish and the pose of the figure are very pathetic and instinct with human interest. Mr. Solomon, when painting his picture, had a stage erected in his studio, lit in the same way as that of the St. James's Theatre. One of Mrs. Campbell's most valued souvenirs is her own copy of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," which is covered with pencil hints, suggestions, and memoranda, and is carefully preserved in a blue morocco cover. She commits her parts to memory usually by writing them out, a plan also pursued by Miss Ellen Terry and Miss Amy Rozelle.

Doubtless, Mrs. Campbell owes much of her fire and highly nervous sensitiveness to the southern blood that is in her veins. She is very ambitious, and a very hard worker, and if her health does not fail, she will—it may be safely prophesied—be not only one of the handsomest and most graceful women on the English stage, but also the greatest tragedienne. She has every natural advantage; the rest is only a question of time and experience.



"MRS. EBB SMITH" (The Notorious Mrs. Ebb Smith).
From a Photo. by Alfred Ellis.

Gleams from the Dark Continent.

III.—THE HIDDEN EGYPTIAN SHIELD.

By CHARLES J. MANSFORD.

I.

E patient, sahib," said Hassan, our guide, as he glanced into my companion's face, which indicated plainly enough the latter's vexation at the delay just then hindering our advance.

"Patient!" exclaimed Denviers. "How can you expect my stock of patience not to be exhausted under the circumstances? We ought to be fifty miles farther on our way than we are. For three days have we been kept dancing attendance on this petty African chief."

"The sahib is always in a hurry," commented Hassan, gravely. "Whether on the day's march, or listening to a story from his slave, it is ever the same—the end is what he seeks. Now, if it had been Allah's will for the sahib to be an Arab, he would consider the matter differently—for has not the Great Prophet declared that to chase time is to waste time; to avoid the rush of life is to travel with the wise?"

"I daresay he has," responded Denviers; "but if Mahomet had had to deal with this Kwembi, he might have changed his opinion and been as eager to get out of this part of Africa as we are."

"I certainly agree with you there, Frank," I said to Denviers; "for, of all the tax-gatherers we have had to deal with, Kwembi is, without doubt, the most exacting. We sent him the usual forced presents, and, as you are aware, he promptly and modestly demanded three times the amount of our offerings. No sooner did he get what he asked for than he declared we had some secret purpose in view in attempting to pass through his territory. You and I and Hassan have all tried to get an audience with Kwembi, but, so far, we have dismally failed."

"Kass," Denviers said to the leader of our Wadigo followers, who joined us as we stood discussing matters under the shade of a beautifully-foliaged makoondé tree, "we sent you to talk Kwembi's head man over, and to promise him a few yards of cloth if he succeeded in getting us an interview: what had he to say?"

"Kwembi refuses to allow an advance; he demands a good rifle—in return he will receive the white chiefs in his palace. After that ye may return, but not otherwise."

"So this petty chief, or King, as he styles himself, considers us as his prisoners?" commented Denviers. "If Kwembi delays us much longer we will try to force our way through his territory, which he will presently discover. As to the rifle, I hope he may get it."

"The sahib is making two great mistakes," Hassan interposed, gravely. "Kwembi is not a petty chief—he has a large number of men, well trained to fight with spear and shield. If that prove to be correct which Hassan, the unworthy latchet of the sahib's shoe, has heard, then the gift of a rifle will be well bestowed if it bring the sahibs into Kwembi's presence."

"What do you mean, Hassan?" Denviers asked, as he saw the Arab was evidently impressed with Kwembi's importance, by the earnest manner in which he urged the gift to be made.

"See!" cried Kass. "Kwembi already sends for an answer." As he spoke the Wadigo pointed to a number of natives advancing towards us.

"Give the rifle, sahibs," Hassan added; "to-day Kwembi only demands one; to-morrow he may desire three before letting us depart." The Arab stopped suddenly, for the natives had reached us and were forcibly repeating the chief's request, saying that he would not wait; we must send a definite answer at once.

The native who delivered Kwembi's message wore a scanty loin-cloth of leopard-cat skin, his arms being partly covered with interlacing strips of the same hide. About his neck was a loose chain of copper, twisted into curious shapes, while his black hair was raised into a head-dress in which several strings of beads were interwoven. In one hand he carried a heavy spear shod with iron, while in the other he held a wand of polished black wood, as a token that he was the King's messenger to us. His attendants, who were six in number, wore girdles and aprons made of antelope skin; about



"KWEMBI'S MESSENGERS."

their necks were strings of black and scarlet beads; each wore bracelets and anklets of plaited and dyed grass, while to our great discomfort they carried native musical instruments, made of reeds, with the noise of which we were almost deafened.

I hurriedly sent Hassan into the hut which had been allotted to us, from which he returned bringing a rifle with him. Taking the weapon in one hand, I pointed with the other towards Kwembi's palace to indicate that the King's terms were accepted. Denviers offered little objection, since Hassan had excited his curiosity somewhat, and this addition to the hongo, or tax, which we had already paid, was, after all, as I successfully urged, only of small value.

Headed by the King's wand-bearer and musicians, we advanced to the palace, Hassan and Kass following as we passed through a double line of armed men drawn up to receive us. No sooner were we conducted into Kwembi's presence than we understood the full meaning of Hassan's words, as we stared in blank surprise at the scene before us.

The main apartment of Kwembi's palace was extremely lofty, its sloping, cone-shaped roof being thatched with reeds, while the sides were made of a material resembling rosewood, and upon them was hung a large number of weapons, mostly shields and spears, taken, so we concluded, from surrounding tribes when defeated in war. About the palace, and ranged on left and right of a *daïs* covered with skins, stood a number of the chief's warriors, the military bearing of whom won involuntary expressions of admiration

from us as we hastily glanced at them while we stood, considerably astonished, before Kwembi and his native wife. The latter, although belonging to an African tribe, as the colour of her skin at once betrayed, was strikingly handsome in appearance. Clad in garments which suited a European rather than a native Queen, the richness of her robes and the splendid strings of pearls woven in the meshes of her luxuriant black hair were only equalled by her clear-cut features and dark, lustrous eyes. Yet the unexpected meeting with the Queen was less astonishing to us than the appearance of Kwembi, the chief. He had the garb of an Arab down to its minutest detail—but the spotlessly white turban which he wore was not lighter in hue than the chief's features, and, when he addressed a few words of welcome to us, which were, however, not over cordial, I could not help giving utterance to the thought which was uppermost:—

"Why!" I cried, "can it be possible that you are an Englishman?"

Kwembi answered gravely in the affirmative and whispered a few words to the Queen beside him. She held out her hand and, as Denviers bent over it, she said, in tolerably good English:—

"Why are these messengers of ours so careless? They reported the arrival of three Arab traders with their dependents; one of you only is an Arab——"

"He is our guide," explained Denviers; then, a little disconcerted at the great reserve which the so-called Kwembi adopted towards us, he added: "We have brought the rifle which you requested," and he held it out to

the strange chief, who critically examined it and returned it immediately.

"Very suitable for a savage, I have no doubt," he said, coolly. "I should be very sorry to use it myself," and he proceeded to discuss the various defects of the rifle with such acumen that we felt he was not to be trifled with.

"Well," commented Denviers, when some stools had been



"'VERY SUITABLE FOR A SAVAGE,' HE SAID."

placed for us before the daïs and made comfortable with some leopard-cat skins spread upon them; "you have already demanded a very heavy hongo, or tax, from us, and we thought your request for a rifle hardly fair. Now that we have discovered, to our surprise, that you are an Englishman, living as chief over this African tribe, we will give you a splendid rifle on condition that you permit us to pass through your territory—which, no doubt, you will readily allow."

Kwembi made no reply in the direct affirmative to this remark, but seemed to force our conversation into the most trivial channel that he could. Kass was sent to bring back a fine weapon from our small stock, and this, Kwembi, when the Wadigo returned, accepted with considerable alacrity, although he tried to appear indifferent to its value. Denviers importuned him to allow us to continue our advance; but, while Kwembi

was willing enough to permit our return, he pointedly refused to accede to my companion's request.

"Why are you so much opposed to our expedition?" Denvers asked, vexed at the chief's obstinacy.

"What is your real object in wishing to pass through my territory?" Kwembi inquired, answering one question with another.

"I have already explained," replied Denviers. "Before starting on our way, we planned the route carefully; naturally enough, we wish to keep to it."

"Can you furnish me with any proof that what you say is true?"

"Why you mistrust your own countrymen so is more than I can understand," responded Denviers; "however, let this convince you that there is no secret object that we wish to carry out."

He drew from his pocket a sheet of paper stiffened with linen, and, unfolding it, held it out to Kwembi.

"The plan of your journey," commented the chief, as he scrutinized the red wavy line showing our route. "I see two peculiar marks upon it," he added, after a pause; "what are they intended to signify?"

"They show as near as possible the position of two places at which unexpected adventures have befallen us," I interposed. "That is all."

"Then you are not in search of the shield, to get which several Arab traders have fitted out expeditions of late, and, concealing their true object, have tried to get my permission to go through my territory?"

"We know nothing about it," Denviers answered, with a glance of surprise at me. "Surely the cause of your objection to our advance cannot be because of such a slight reason?"

"Wait!" Kwembi interrupted. "You are evidently speaking without knowledge of the rumour which has long been current among the Arabs, that I know more about this strange shield than I care to tell."

The chief whispered something to his consort, who rose and passed into a side apartment of the palace, at the same time that, by a wave of his hand, Kwembi dismissed his savage guards.

"The Arabs I dare not trust, and to make another expedition in search of the shield, after what has already happened to me, is more than my nerves would bear. If you will solemnly promise to endeavour to recover it for me, I will allow you to go on your way, which, strangely enough, passes the spot where the shield is hidden. More than that, I will present you with this ring."

Kwembi drew from his finger a remarkable ring, which he held out to Denviers, who, after we had examined it curiously, returned it to the chief.

"It is yours," Kwembi continued, pressing it upon Denviers; "take it, and accept my terms."

"We will serve you in any way possible," my companion answered. "Do you fully realize the strange nature of your gift?"

Kwembi answered in the affirmative, and when Denviers had passed the ring to Hassan, to place with our other treasures, the chief continued:—

"You wonder how I came by it? Well, I found it in a tomb, and it answers exactly to the description of that once worn by Menes, the first King of Egypt."

Denviers gave an incredulous whistle, then said, with a smile:—

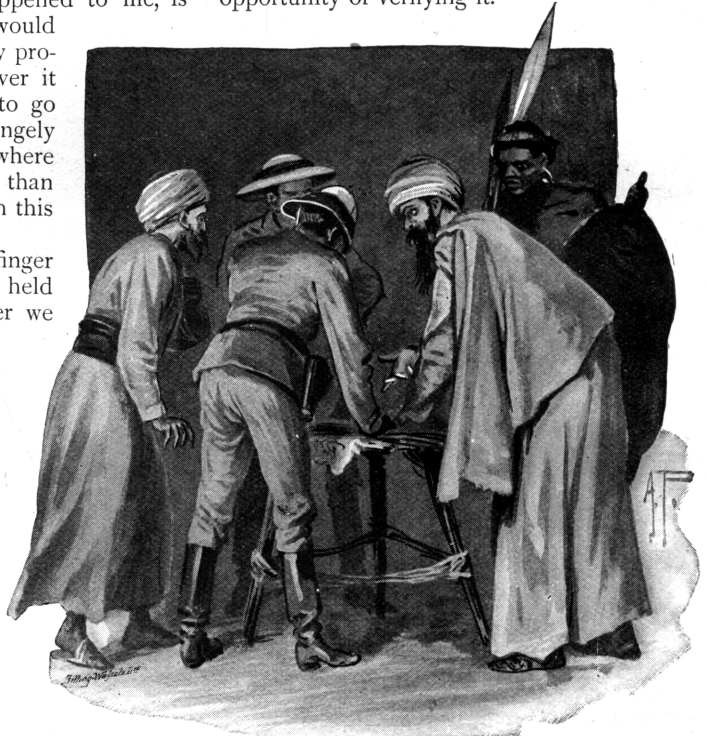
"Of course, you don't expect us to believe your yarn? Our Arab guide often——"

"You need not believe it unless you like," Kwembi retorted; then, going towards the entrance of the palace, he gave some order. A minute afterwards some native women entered, bearing a table curiously constructed out of reeds.

When they had departed, Kwembi left us alone for a time, then re-entered and placed upon the table a discoloured and ragged sheet of parchment, which he unrolled as we gathered round it, and then we saw that it was covered with hieroglyphics.

"When first I found this parchment and

became aware of what it contained," Kwembi continued, "I thought its narrative only the invention of some ancient Egyptian priest. Like you, I was incredulous; but listen, I will tell you what transpired in consequence of the discovery of this worm-eaten scroll, and, queer as the story is, you will have an opportunity of verifying it."



"LIKE YOU, I WAS INCRECULOUS."

When we had inspected the parchment to our satisfaction, Kwembi took it in his hand, and sat down upon his throne again. Denviers was invited to occupy the seat at the King's side, while Hassan and I rested upon the stools previously placed before the throne. Kass, holding his shield and spear, sank down on one knee, Wadigo fashion, whereupon Kwembi at once began his narrative, referring occasionally to the scroll at first; while, throughout the story, we listened attentively, the King's animated utterances impressing us that he, at all events, believed what was upon the parchment, and also that the singular termination to his adventure had no other solution than the one he gave us.

II.

"Of the events which led to the discovery of this parchment I shall only give you a very brief account," Kwembi began; "except to

mention that, for several years, I and another Englishman devoted ourselves to research among the tombs of Meydum, in which, as you are doubtless aware, were found some extremely ancient sculptures. The success which followed our first efforts led us to visit many of the tombs which are to be found in the valley of that mysterious river—the Nile. It so happened that one day we discovered a sarcophagus and, among the treasures buried with the mummy of a woman which it contained, we found several strings of pearls. Some of these you no doubt observed adorning the hair of my consort when you first saw her on entering this palace. In addition to them we discovered the ring you now have, and which is minutely described in the hieroglyphics of this worm-eaten parchment, although, owing to the great age of the latter, here and there small fragments are missing, as well as some parts of it being difficult to clearly decipher.

“The events narrated in the parchment aroused our interest considerably, for some strange details concerning Menes, the Egyptian, are given upon it.”

“There are many mythical stories told of this King,” *Denviers* interposed. “Although this parchment may refer to Menes, it does not follow that the one who traced the hieroglyphics upon it witnessed the events recorded there. They may have been written hundreds of years after the occurrence took place, and possibly were put down upon hearsay.”

“Menes,” *Kwembi* continued, “was visited on one occasion by the Queen of a far country who was more lovely, if one may judge from this scroll, than the famous *Cleopatra*, destined, long after the great King passed away, to sit upon his throne. A wonderful journey was hers, for here I read that she crossed a sea then unknown, the primitive fleet of boats which hers headed being tossed for many days and nights upon the storm-swept waters. At last the mouth of the Nile stream was entered, and down the mystic river the Queen and her retinue passed. The wondrous scenes which opened out, as the current swept them on, charmed the eyes of the Queen as she stretched out her hand at times and plucked from the bank the blossoms of the *mimosa*. Yet fairer than anything there the Queen herself appeared, as well an attendant prince knew who sat at her feet and caught the glances of delight from her eyes, turned upon all else but him—her subject.

“A great festival was held to celebrate the

Queen's visit, while Menes, smitten with love for the Queen, begged her to share his throne, which eventually she did. Among the many gifts bestowed by the Queen upon the Egyptian King when first she visited his land was a shield, curiously wrought in gold, inset in which was a three-headed serpent of magnificent brilliants, the eyes and darting tongues being of rubies. Beside the King one day, as he sat upon the throne, stood a slave who held the shield, while, at the feet of his bride, her favourite female slave rested, or at times let her fingers stray over the strings of a sweet-tuned lyre as she sang of the land whence Menes' Queen had come, and to rule which in her name a subject prince was set.

“Long before this time the chief prince who accompanied her had besought the Queen to be his—but was refused. No sooner did Menes obtain his bride than the disappointed suitor began to scheme against both King and Queen. With the object of stirring up a revolt in the far land, he begged to be sent to rule it, but Menes advised another to be chosen, and the thwarted prince prepared for revenge. He entered the audience-room of the palace with a weapon concealed upon his person; approaching Menes, he begged to whisper some strange news into the King's ear. Deceived by his friendly manner, Menes stooped down. On high the weapon flashed in an instant, but the bearer of the shield was too quick and caught upon it the descending blow. Quick as lightning strikes, the prince aimed a blow at the startled Queen! Before her the slave, who had been resting at her feet, but who had arisen when Menes was threatened with death, flung her own body, and as the weapon pierced her breast she gave one wild cry and fell dead! Down from the hand of its bearer fell the shield, and when he raised it the slave's life-stream had died it crimson.

“‘Seize him!’ cried Menes; then, as the hastily summoned slaves dragged the prince away, Menes led his Queen from the apartment. Next day the fate of the prince was announced to him. Never again could the eyes of Menes' bride look upon the shield stained with the blood of the one who had saved her life. The prince was thrust living into a sarcophagus, after being led fast bound to a remote tomb near the source of the Nile, and with him was buried the shield and the weapon he had taken life with. The female slave was embalmed and buried with the King's death gifts of pearls and a ring from

his finger, while this parchment was placed in her tomb, that if in after ages the sarcophagus chanced to be opened, the memory of the slave's devotion to the Queen, even to death, might be recorded."

"And you found the tomb in which the body of the female slave was placed?" I asked, as Kwembi concluded that part of his story.

"That is the least astonishing part of what happened," he answered. "So convinced was my companion at the time that every word upon the parchment was true, that he persuaded me to join him in a search for the tomb of the prince with whom the shield was buried, which, from the description given of it, you will understand was of great value. Month after month we searched and tomb after tomb we found, till at last——"

Kwembi broke off his story suddenly, and glancing into his face, I saw that he had turned ghastly pale, while the perspiration stood in beads upon his forehead.

"You found at last——?" Denvers suggestively remarked, vaguely wondering at the agitation which had seized Kwembi.

"My story has a strange ending, one that you will hardly credit, yet I will endeavour to tell you as well as I can what happened," the chief continued. "Yes, we found the tomb of the nameless prince at last. Like most of the ancient burial places, it had an entrance chamber. Passing into this we saw the shaft at our feet. The two fellows who acted as our servants lowered us in turn by a rope, and we found ourselves in a vault, whereupon we lit a torch and examined the place for the sarcophagus. Judge of our surprise when none was discovered! The event was so unusual that we discussed its meaning as we glanced into each other's face, lit up by the torch which I held. At last an idea occurred to my companion, who called up the shaft, in response to which an iron pick was



"THE WEAPON FLASHED."

let down at the end of our rope. Taking this implement, which long experience had taught him to handle deftly, he struck upon the sides of the vault. Hard and ringing was the sound each blow gave until, just as I was about to renew the torch, which was burning low, my companion cried:—

"It is here! The sarcophagus has been walled in!' With excited blows he struck the wall, which yielded far more readily than we expected—but lower burnt the torch.

"In the surprise which the discovery roused in us we thought of nothing else save the one fact that the sarcophagus was placed on end, as we saw when the facing of stone was torn away.

"Lower, lower still, burnt the torch.

"Then the lid of the sarcophagus was wrenched away. I caught one glimpse of the mummy, saw the shield with the gems glittering in it, then, with a cry to my companion that the torch was going out, I dropped it as it singed my fingers. What happened then?" Kwembi asked, rising from his seat and covering his eyes, as if to shut out some scene which again rose before him. "What happened,

you ask? *I saw the face of the mummy thrust into mine; we fell together, and two sets of bony fingers gripped me by the throat!* I could not cry out; for a minute my senses reeled with the horror of the thing, then I caught my weird assailant in turn, and we fought together upon the floor of the vault in the blind darkness, no sound from our lips escaping as we struggled for the mastery. At last I shook myself free, ran headlong to the foot of the shaft, wound the rope about my waist, and shouted to the fellahs to drag me up!

"No sooner did the men see my scared face and the marks of that fearful struggle which I bore, than they basely fled in terror; nor did I once after see them again. Suddenly a thought occurred to me—my companion! In securing my own safety I had forgotten him! I threw myself flat upon the ground and cried out to him, as I tried to pierce the gloom at the bottom of the shaft. No answer reached me—none! I called out again and again, but heard only the echo of my own voice ringing in the depths of the vault. Sick with horror, I ran from the place and wandered aimlessly about, but whether for days or weeks I cannot tell. I next remember waking, as if from a dream, to find a native woman bending over me, by whom I had been found, it appears, in a cave, such as there are in plenty in the land over which I rule. By chance she had discovered me there, and, so long, had been able to save me from the men of her

tribe by keeping my presence unknown to them. When my strength was sufficiently restored, she urged me to return the way I came, but I refused. The dreadful event which had happened so completely unhinged

my mind that I had no wish to live. In spite of her entreaties, I made my way to where the huts of her tribe were, and was promptly seized by two braves, who dragged me before the chief. For some time his tribe had been at war with another, and even as I stood before Haika in this palace a messenger came in saying that the chief's braves were being driven in.

"More with the object of flinging away my life than any other, I promised Haika if he would spare me I would fight for him against the invading tribe. So often had he been tricked by Arab traders that he refused, but at last gave a reluctant consent. All that afternoon his vanquished braves came hurrying in, telling of the num-

bers slain in the recent battle. By means of the chief's headman—who, from frequent intercourse with Arab traders, managed to interpret my words—I volunteered to head a division of the braves if they were intrusted to me. Accordingly, when Haika drew up his men to defend his palace and the huts of the great village, I selected a number of them and led them away. The chief presented me with a rifle, which proved more serviceable than I expected; while a fortunate downpour of rain, which occurred that night, was considered a good omen. The natives persuaded themselves that the white man was lucky!



"TWO SETS OF BONY FINGERS GRIPPED MY THROAT."

"About two hours before dawn the enemy made the attack, Haika's braves resisting stoutly. Having made a wide detour with the men I led, we took the foes in the rear—before the sun had risen the enemy fled panic-stricken, and Haika's braves had won! Both sides suffered severely, as the blent heaps of the dying and dead plainly showed. Seeing a throng of braves gathered round one of the wounded, I pressed through them to find Haika lying there, clutching in his stiffening fingers his bloody spear. He seemed to recognise me; as I bent over him he feebly raised himself a little, motioned to me to take his weapon, and then fell back dead.

"The chief has chosen the white man in his place!' the braves cried, and that day, on the field of battle, I was made chief of this tribe over which I now rule, and from which I would not go, for they are faithful to me, and I accept the strange fortune which is mine. 'She who found me in the cave has become my bride, while, so efficient in war are my braves now, that the power of five tribes dwelling about my territory has been completely broken. The Arab traders have several times endeavoured to get my consent to pass through this territory, for, somehow, the secret of that strange tomb has become known to them, although they do not know the exact position of the place concerning which they have put many unanswered questions to me. As to the shield, I dare not enter the tomb again in search of it; what I think about the nameless prince whose fingers wound themselves about my throat I can only hint. You look incredulous, but remember that the parchment declares he was not slain when thrust into the sarcophagus."

"You surely don't wish to persuade us that he has lived in that tomb since the time of Menes?" asked Denviers. "Our Arab guide, Hassan, as I have said, can spin a tolerably tall yarn at times, but yours——" and he laughed irreverently as he rose from the chief's side at the close of the story.

"In my opinion," Kwembi returned, "much of the mysterious lore of Ancient Egypt has been lost; who knows under what conditions the prince may have been immured there? As to whether the struggle of which I speak took place or not, let these marks testify." The chief unfastened the garment about his neck and showed several large lateral scars, then he added:—

"Now will you agree to my conditions? You accepted the ring of Menes; if you will swear to me to recover this shield which

is mine by right of discovery, I will send a body of braves to join your followers. When you get possession of it you can send it back to me—on these terms you may continue your journey, otherwise you must turn back——"

"And if we fail to find the tomb?" Denviers interrupted.

"That will not happen; I will give you an exact description of its position," and Kwembi proceeded to do so.

"We will start at sunrise to-morrow," Denviers agreed, when everything was satisfactorily settled, and we were then conducted to a hut prepared for us, where we sat smoking and talking together till the night was advanced, Hassan and Kass seeing to the comfort of our followers.

When morning came we set out on our march, headed by the braves whom Kwembi appointed to go with us. At the end of the second week after leaving the chief's palace, we found ourselves at last within a short distance of the tomb. Leaving the encampment we had made, Denviers and I went forward, accompanied by Hassan and Kass with two of Kwembi's braves, who were to carry the shield if it were discovered.

III.

OFTEN as Denviers had discussed the subject with me, neither of us had conjectured rightly what the end of our adventure would be—so completely did it take us by surprise.

After making our way along a narrow path which wound up the precipitous, gloomy cliffs at the foot of which the White Nile flowed, we came to a narrow entry and, stooping down, we passed within. Hassan led the way holding a torch; following him, we found ourselves in a grotto, the roof of which rose high above our heads.

"The entry to the tomb, sahibs," the Arab cried, as we stood by his side and glanced at the fantastic shapes of the jagged projections from walls and roof. Denviers lit another torch, and, handing his rifle to Kass, motioned to Hassan to go on. The Arab cautiously advanced. After traversing a few yards he stopped.

"See! The way lies here," he exclaimed, pointing down a gloomy shaft, and without delay we descended, Kass remaining behind with the two natives, who lowered us in turn into the vault of which Kwembi had spoken.

We soon discovered that we were in no hastily prepared excavation. Pillars of granite supported the roof, sculptured with many a strange design. The walls upon which the

flickering torchlight fell were painted—here, the half-obliterated face of a sphinx, inscrutable and stolid, looked away from the hands of suppliants held appealingly towards it; there, a great procession was limned, the central figure being a man, probably the prince, led into captivity or to death. At times a fallen pillar obstructed our way as on we passed, till we had gone fifty paces or more and the opposing wall was reached. Examining the latter as carefully as we had done the first, we saw no indication of a break in it such as we were led to expect. Slowly we turned and walked close to the third side.

"I hope the main object of our expedition is not doomed to disappointment," Denviers remarked. "Strange as this place is, it seems to me very likely——" He stopped suddenly, for Hassan, who was a few yards ahead, was seen to stoop down as if examining something upon the rocky floor.

"The sahibs' slave has found what they seek," he cried, and quickly we hastened to the spot. An excavation, rising to the height of seven feet, had been made in the wall, the material taken from which lay in a confused heap close by. Nor was that all we saw. An ancient sarcophagus, broken, lay in shattered fragments, mingled with pieces of decayed wood, once forming the inner casing of the mummy, flung down when the lid was wrenched off by Kwembi's companion.

Yellow as parchment, yet wonderfully preserved from the ravages of time, the mummy was; if cloths had once swathed it, none were there then, save the rotting fillet about its forehead; a strange glitter came from its face, for the latter had been gilded; its tangled hair was thick with dust. I touched the hand near me; it came off with part of the arm as my fingers closed upon it. Holding it near Denviers's torch, as we glanced curiously at it, a spark fell, and in a moment the hand and arm burnt away, filling the air with an odour of bitumen, and leaving a mere pinch of ashes behind.

"The shield," I whispered to Denviers, awed by the strange surroundings of our adventure; but, search as we did, we could not find it. Finally, we determined to

examine the whole vault systematically, Denviers and I beginning from one of its oblong sides, Hassan from the other. The Arab's torch was visible to us for some minutes; then it disappeared, as we heard a cry from his lips to Allah and Mahomet.

We hastily passed across to the fourth side of the vault, where we found another excavation leading upwards, and in front of us we saw Hassan hurrying on with his torch held above his head. A ray of light soon lit the excavation from without; a minute after we had emerged upon the path which led to the tomb, but higher than we had previously gone. We heard a crash as of some-



"HE SWUNG HIMSELF
ROUND AND THRUST HIS
FOE HEADLONG BELOW."

thing striking the rock below, then again Hassan's excited cries rang upon our ears. We looked up and saw the Arab struggling upon a narrow shelf of rock with an opponent, whose matted hair and beard seemed as ragged as

the vestiges of clothing upon his half-naked body. Swaying to and fro upon the giddy height, they clung to each other, fighting each for his life and the other's

death. Each laboured to get his foe's back to the threatening void : we saw Hassan forced into that position, heard a fierce cry from his opponent, then, just as the Arab seemed to totter on the verge of the precipitous cliff, he swung himself round and thrust his foe headlong below ! How it was done we never rightly understood, but as he fell the man caught at a projecting ledge, clung to it for one brief second, drew himself up with his hands, and with a mad cry ran into one of the orifices which honeycombed the cliff. Long as we sought for him we could not find the man ; whether he was Kwembi's companion, and in the blind darkness had unknowingly fought with him, mistaking his comrade's clasp for that of the crumbling mummy, was more than we had an opportunity of discovering, although our conjecture was such. There was the excavation from the tomb into the open air—easily made in the soft rock with the implement of which Kwembi had spoken—to support our view, and the fact that the mind of one at least of the explorers had been shaken by that weird, mutual mistake !

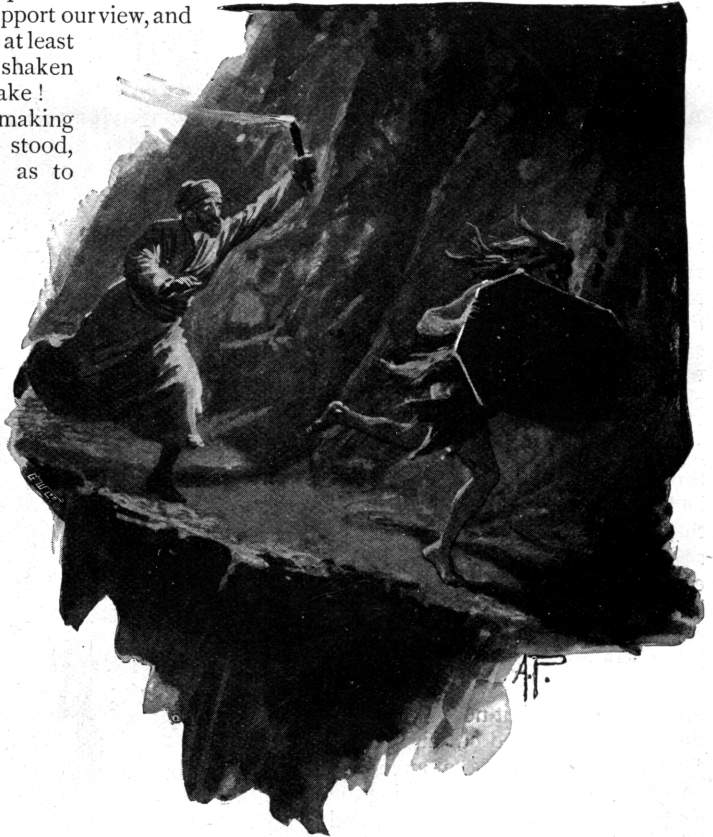
"Sahibs," cried Hassan, making his way towards where we stood, forming hasty conjectures as to what had happened, "the Great Prophet guided Hassan's feet to enter the excavation. There he discovered one who barred his way, holding in his grasp the strange shield. When their Arab slave thrust his torch into the foe's face he turned and fled. Finding himself pursued, the man ran out upon the ledge of rock and flung this strange shield far below, then grappled with the dust of the sahibs' feet."

"Well, Hassan," said Denviers, as the Arab afterwards assisted us to secure the shield, which had, however, been dented slightly in the fall, "the dust of the sahibs' feet, as you call yourself, had a narrow escape from being dashed to pieces,"

"Allah and Mahomet preserved Hassan," our Arab gravely responded, as we fastened the shield to a spear, and placed the ends of the latter upon the shoulders of two of Kwembi's men, and bade them carry it to where our encampment was. "Surely it is his Kismet to be saved that he may serve the Englishmen and tell them from time to time of the wise sayings of the Great Prophet."

"We both hope so, at all events," Denviers replied, with a smile. "Kwembi shall hear of your share in recovering the treasure he first discovered ; and when we are resting in our tent this evening you shall read us some more out of the Koran, or tell us a story."

"For Hassan to hear is for him to obey," said the Arab, with a profound obeisance, and we started for our encampment. To Kwembi we dispatched the shield, guarded by the natives, next day, while we set out once more upon our journey.



"HE FLUNG THE STRANGE SHIELD FAR BELOW,"

Calculating Boys.



HERE is no doubt that the power for mental calculation varies to a remarkable degree in different individuals, but it is not so much in adults as in children that the difference in the development of this particular faculty is so strikingly apparent, and many remarkable instances are recorded of children in whom it has developed itself in an extraordinary manner at a very early age. Among these, one of the most remarkable is the case of George Parker Bidder.

This boy was born in 1806, at Morton Hampstead, in Devonshire, on the borders of Dartmoor, where his father carried on a small business as a stone-mason. At the early age of four he showed a most extraordinary ability for calculation, which with slight assistance from an elder brother assumed quite phenomenal proportions. His peculiar talents soon attracted general attention, and his father found it a much more profitable employment to carry his son about the country, and exhibit him as the "Calculating Phenomenon," than following his trade. In this way young Bidder visited many parts of the country, astonishing the different people who came to see and question him, with the wonderful rapidity with which he was able to answer, without external aid of any description, the most difficult questions.

Of these the following are a few of the most extraordinary examples: If a flea spring 2ft. 3in. in every hop, how many hops must it take to go round the world, the circumference being 25,020 miles; and how long would it be performing the journey, allowing it to take 60 hops every minute without intermission? Answer: 58,713,600 hops, and 1 year 314 days 13 hours 20min.

The following question was solved by him in 40sec.: Suppose the ball at the top of St.

Paul's Cathedral to be 6ft. in diameter, what did the gilding cost at $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per square inch? Answer, £237 10s. 1d.

The following in 1min. 20sec.: Suppose a city to be illuminated with 9,999 lamps, each lamp to consume 1 pint of oil every 4 hours in succession, how many gallons would they consume in 40 years? Answer, 109,489,050 gallons.

Another curious question was: Suppose the earth to consist of 971,000,000 of inhabitants, and suppose they die in 30 years and 4 months, how many have returned to dust since the time of Adam, computing it to be 5,850 years? Multiply the answer by 99.

It is related that on one occasion the proposer of a question was not satisfied with Bidder's answer. The boy said the answer was correct, and requested the proposer to work the sum over again. During the operation Bidder said he was certain he was right, for he had worked the question in another way; and before the proposer found he was wrong, and Bidder right, he had solved the question by a third method.

But Bidder was not always content with being questioned only, but would sometimes puzzle his interrogators by a question of his own, and on one of these occasions he put the following:—

"A man found thirteen cats in his garden. He got out his gun, fired at them and killed seven. How many were left?" "Six," was the reply. "You are wrong," he said, "none were left. The rest ran away."

Whether or no he was the originator of this time-honoured joke, his biographers do not say.

During one of his exhibition tours, fortunately for the lad his performances attracted the attention of some eminent scholars, who, after making inquiries, subsequently undertook his education, and he was placed at a first-rate school at Camberwell, and afterwards



GEORGE PARKER BIDDER (AGE 8).
From a Painting by Miss Hayter.

at Edinburgh, where he carried off the prizes given by the magistrates of that town for the study of higher mathematics.

Bidder was afterwards employed for a short time on the Ordnance Survey; but finally he decided to follow the profession of an engineer, in which his extraordinary gift would have ample scope. It was while thus employed that he became associated with Robert Stephenson and the Birmingham Railway, and in the construction of this he took a very active part.

Some years after he entered Parliament, and numerous stories are extant of his wonderful skill in detecting a flaw in some elaborate set of calculations, whereby he was often enabled to upset an opponent's case. Or, at other times, he would establish his own case by arguments based upon mathematical data, possibly only at the moment placed before him. It is said that on one occasion an opposing counsel asked that he might not be allowed to remain in the committee-room, on the ground that "Nature had endowed him with qualities that did not place his opponents on a fair footing."

After taking a leading part in many important engineering works, he died at Dartmouth, September 20th, 1878.

Another of these extraordinary children, between whom and Bidder honours were almost equally divided, was Zerah Colburn, born at Cabot, Vermont, United States, September 1st, 1804. Signs of his wonderful powers appeared at a very tender age. The discovery was accidentally made by his father, who was much surprised one day to hear him repeating the product of several numbers, although at the time he had received no other instruction than such as could be obtained at a small country school, whose curriculum did not include writing or ciphering. He thereupon proposed a variety of arithmetical questions to his son, all of which the child answered with remarkable facility and correct-

ness. At the age of eight, the boy was able to solve most difficult questions by the mere operation of his mind. Many persons of the first eminence for their knowledge in mathematics made a point of seeing and conversing with him, and they proposed to him a great variety of questions to test his marvellous powers. Among them were the following:—

Give the square of 999,999. After hesitating a little, he replied 999,998,000,001, and observed that he produced this result by multiplying the square of 37,037 by the square of 27. He was then asked to multiply the answer twice by 49 and once by 25, a task which he accomplished successfully, though the answer consists of seventeen figures.

Name the cube root of 413,993,348,677. To this he gave the correct answer in five seconds. How many times would a coach wheel, 12ft. in circumference, turn round in 256 miles, and how many minutes in 48 years? To the first he replied in two seconds, 112,640; and to the second before the question could be written down, 25,228,800, and added that the number of seconds in the same period was 1,513,728,000. What are the factors of 247,483? To this he replied 941 and 263, which are the only factors.

Various other questions of a similar nature respecting the roots and powers of very high numbers were indiscriminately proposed to him, and he always succeeded in giving the correct answers. He could tell the exact product arising from the multiplication of any number consisting of two, three, or four figures, by any other number consisting of a like number of figures; or if any number consisting of six or seven places of figures were proposed, he would determine, with equal ease and expedition, all the factors of which it was composed. This singular faculty therefore extended not only to the raising of powers, but also to the extraction of the square and cube roots of the numbers proposed, and this without the assist-



ZERAH COLBURN (AGE 9).

From a Painting by T. Hull.

ance of any visible aid in the form of pencil or paper.

Many persons tried to obtain a knowledge of the method by which he was enabled to answer with so much facility and correctness the questions put to him, but without success; for he positively declared that he was unable to tell how the answers came into his mind. That his process of operation was other than the usual mode of proceeding was evident, for he was entirely ignorant of the common rules of arithmetic at this time, and could not, it is stated, perform upon paper a simple sum in multiplication or division. But in the extraction of roots and the mentioning of factors, he gave the answers so promptly as not to admit of any lengthy operation taking place in his mind, when it would require, according to the ordinary method of solution, a very difficult and laborious calculation.

After exhibiting his powers in many parts of the United States, this child was brought to England in May, 1812, and exhibited at the "Exhibition Rooms" in Spring Gardens. During his stay in this country the Earl of Bristol, among others, took great interest in the boy's welfare, and sent him to Westminster School. Here he remained till 1819, when, unfortunately for the lad, he was removed, owing to his father refusing to comply with certain arrangements proposed by the Earl.

Colburn afterwards tried the stage as a profession, and was for a few months under the tuition of Charles Kemble; but his first appearance satisfied both himself and his instructor that he was not adapted for a theatrical career, and he finally became a master in an American University. In 1833 he published his autobiography, and from this it appears that his faculty of computation left him about the time he reached manhood. He died March 2nd, 1840.

In 1795 there was born, in Bilbao, a Spanish boy named Lacy, who also gave early demonstrations of his special powers, and at an early age was brought over to this country and exhibited here, creating no small stir by his wonderful performances in the calculating art.

A very singular instance of this curious development of the calculating faculty, and differing in several respects from those hitherto mentioned, is



JEDIDIAH BUXTON.
From a Painting by B. Killingbeck.

the case of Jedidiah Buxton, who, though he can hardly be termed an infant prodigy, is of sufficient importance in the same capacity to find a place among them.

This man was born in 1707, at Elmeton, in Derbyshire, where his father was schoolmaster. But, notwithstanding his father's profession, Jedidiah's education was so much neglected that he was not even taught to write. How he first discovered his extraordinary faculty for numbers he could never tell, and, unlike his fellow-calculators, he does not seem to have shown any startling development very early in life; for it was not till he had arrived at man's estate that his powers assumed anything like phenomenal proportions. But once started in this direction, his mind seems to have

been engrossed with the subject, to the exclusion of all others, so that he frequently took no cognizance of external objects, except with regard to their numbers.

It seems to have been invariably his custom, if any space of time were mentioned in his presence, to repeat the time in minutes and seconds; if any distance, the number of hair's breadths. By this means he greatly increased his power of memory with regard to figures, and stored up in his mind many products for use as they might be called upon. So remark-



M. M. J. R. LACY (AGE 9).
From a Painting by J. Smart.

able was his memory that, while solving a question, he could desist and resume the operation again where he had left off, even if it were a month after. His method of working was entirely his own, and he was not so much remarkable for his rapidity as for his invariable correctness.

He was once asked as a test of his powers : In a body whose three sides are 23,145,789 yards, 5,641,732 yards, and 54,965 yards, how many cubical eighths of an inch?—and after some time, although still continuing his work among a number of fellow-labourers, he signified that he was ready with the answer. Meantime his interrogator calculated it upon paper, and upon his taking out his pocket-book to take down the answer, Jedidiah asked which end he would begin with, for he was ready either way. His questioner chose the regular order, and, to his great surprise, found that in a line of twenty-eight figures he made no hesitation or the least mistake.

Two very remarkable things about this man were that he would suffer two people to propose different questions, one immediately after the other, and give each their respective answers, without the least confusion. He would also talk freely while working out his questions, as if it were no molestation or hindrance to him.

One of the most stirring events in his otherwise quiet and obscure life was a visit to London in 1754, when he was introduced to the members of the Royal Society, who asked him a number of questions, to prove his abilities, all of which he answered to their entire satisfaction and surprise. Beyond this he never left his birthplace, where he died in 1772.

Another boy, a German, named Christian Friedrich Heinecken, who was known as the "Infant of Lubeck," from the place where he was born in 1721, besides his remarkable faculty for numbers, is said to have known, at the age of one, all the principal events related in the Pentateuch, at two was well acquainted with the chief historical events of the Bible, and at three had a knowledge of universal history and geography, Latin and French. People came from all parts to see him, and the King of Denmark had him brought to Copenhagen

in 1724, in order to assure himself of the truth of what he had heard regarding him. But shortly after this, little Heinecken was taken ill, when he predicted his own death, which took place in 1725, at the tender age of four.

Many other examples of these "freaks of Nature" are known, and among them may be mentioned one of a negro of Maryland, who, with no education whatever, possessed a wonderful power for numbers, and solved many difficult questions put to him. An account of his career appeared in the "Annual Register," 1788.

Being endowed by Nature with such extraordinary abilities, one naturally looks for some great mathematical work, or some startling discovery with regard to numbers, from these youths in after life, but in vain, for not one of them, with the exception of George Bidder, ever seems to have attained to anything of importance, or to have struck



CHRISTIAN FRIEDRICH HEINECKEN (AGE 3).
From a Painting by J. Harper.

out any particular line for himself out of the ordinary beaten track; but rather, as time went on, they appear to have lost most of their marvellous power, or to have died before reaching an age when its practical application might have been made to serve some useful purpose.

M.P.'s as Artists.

BY WILLIAM G. FITZGERALD.

I.

THE House of Commons is a congregation of experts and specialists; there is hardly a single branch of industry, science, and art that is not represented in the 'mother of Parliaments.' This is among the *obiter dicta* of Sir Richard Temple, and is amply demonstrated in this article—at least, in one respect.

It is right and proper that Sir Richard himself should have the place of honour in this interesting "gallery" of artistic members of Parliament. Perhaps, by the way, I ought in some cases to say ex-members; but the distinguished gentlemen who have so courteously placed themselves and their work at my disposal are for the most part such old Parliamentary hands that—if only for the latter reason—it would be, indeed, invidious to exclude them as not coming strictly within the scope of this article.

Considerations of space compel me to suppress the awe-inspiring list of Sir Richard Temple's decorations and the details of his splendid Indian career; let it suffice to say that the genial baronet has governed altogether something like fifteen millions of Her Majesty's subjects. My task at Heath Brow, Sir Richard's beautiful home at Hampstead, was by no means a light one. There were about three hundred water-colour drawings to be inspected, executed by the indefatigable statesman in Central and Northern India; part of Western India; the Eastern and Western Himalayas; Tibet; the Khyber Pass region; the country near Afghanistan; the upper course of the Brahmapootra; Tenasserim and Siam; and all through Nepal, east of the Himalayas.

In addition to this formidable collection, there were 120 oil studies, prepared during

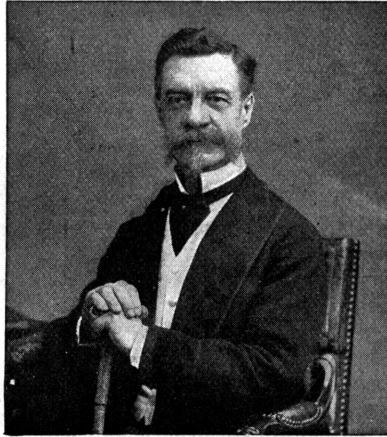
Sir Richard's travels in Egypt, Turkey, and the shores of the Mediterranean; Central Russia, the northernmost parts of Norway, the Canadian and American Rockies, the Yosemite Valley, and the Yellowstone National Park. In the latter wonderful region Sir Richard worked at an altitude of 11,000ft.

Speaking of his artistic work in India, Sir Richard said: "It gave me a knowledge of the country and peoples I had to govern; and thus directly helped towards my administrative success." And, in truth, he displayed amazing energy in getting about the country, riding forty or fifty miles before breakfast (sketching in the saddle), and using as mounts, besides horses, elephants, camels, and hill-ponies.

When even the latter hardy animals had to be discarded, owing to the wildness of the district, Sir Richard pursued his way on foot, and when he could no longer walk, he climbed. The first of Sir Richard Temple's beautiful water-colours reproduced here is a view of a Mogul palace on the border of Srinagar Lake, in Kashmir. I should say at once that these reproductions convey but

a poor idea of the ineffable—almost unearthly—beauty of the scenes, glowing with colour and actually realizing the descriptions of the "Arabian Nights." This palace is in the Royal gardens called Shalimar, and is the very centre of the closing scene of the story of Moore's "Lalla Rookh." According to the imagination of the poet, the Feast of Roses was held in this very palace.

Sir Richard's descriptions were wholly admirable. He would pore over each picture in turn, going into the whys and wherefores in a delightfully explicit manner. Taking up the first, he gave a little architectural disquisition in his own inimitable style.



SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, BART.
From a Photo. by Elliott & Fry.

"The great pillared veranda, with the huge pediments and massive stone walls, is entirely of black marble, called Sung-i-Moosa (Stone of Moses). Now, as regards the landscape. The waterfalls and the lake are wholly artificial, being formed by dams from the mountain streams. In the background

the Sacred Pig, known to his devotees by the more imposing appellation of Shiwla, the god of destruction. In this particular instance he is really a primeval rock. They scooped out the rock over the ground to form his legs; and, of course, the legs have their roots deep in the bowels of the earth. Having got



MOGUL PALACE, SRINAGAR LAKE, KASHMIR.
From the Water-colour Drawing by Sir Richard Temple, Bart.

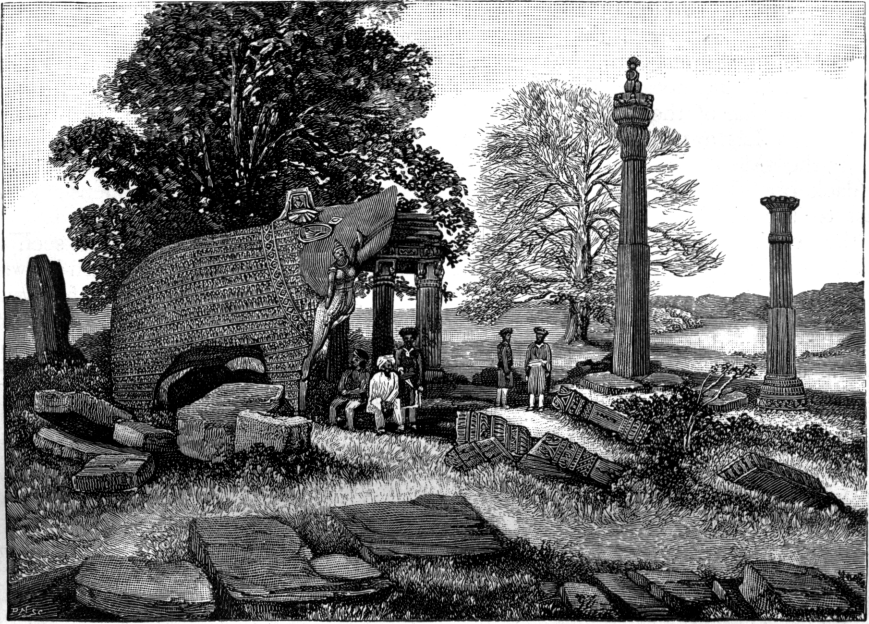
are seen the snow-capped mountains belonging to the Himalayan Range at the back, or north, of Kashmir. The trees are the famous planes of Kashmir, spoken of in 'Lalla Rookh' as 'Chenars.' The flowering shrubs are lilacs; and the plants in the foreground are irises beginning to bloom. On the veranda are seen the Mohammedan attendants and Court servitors."

This picture was painted by Sir Richard in 1871. Having a month's holiday, he took Lady Temple to this gorgeously-lovely spot, knowing it to be one of the places in all India best worth seeing. The distinguished couple were taken across the lake in Royal barges.

"Ancient Buddhist remains at Erun, in the Saugor district; British territory; centre of India." It was in this wise that Sir Richard heralded the description of the second extraordinary picture reproduced here. Now, no one has ever accused the estimable baronet of frivolity; nevertheless, he related the story of this picture with such complacent glee that I feel constrained to give it in his own words: "The principal item is

thus far, they carved away the right-hand side of the rock so as to form his head, and then smoothed off his back, leaving a little upright space near the head for the ear. A little place was also left for the tusk, on which was carved the figure of a goddess, hanging on by her hand."

The approximate size of this monumental animal may be judged from the figures seated on a stone near him. These are Sir Richard's camp attendants; and the distinguished artist assures me that this time, at least, he depicted quite correctly the attitude of the natives, who were sketched while gossiping among themselves, never dreaming what their master was about. "Ordinarily," remarked Sir Richard, "these fellows would pose stiffly—ludicrously, in fact; but on this occasion they were unconscious and *dégagé*." And he laughed contagiously. Presently, he continued, gravely: "Behind the Pig are the remains of a Buddhist temple, along the side of which, and forming the background to the Pig, is a banyan tree. To the right of the Pig stands a pillar, with a finely-carved



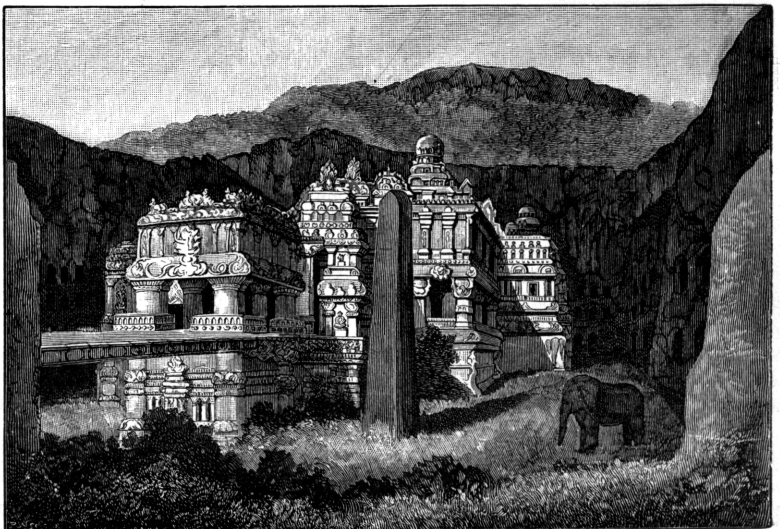
THE "SACRED PIG" AND OTHER REMAINS AT ERUN, INDIA.
From the Water-colour Drawing by Sir Richard Temple, Bart.

finial, on the top of which is seated Buddha, with a stone halo and sun rays around his head. Still farther to the right is another pillar, without a finial. The foreground is strewn with slabs and other remains, probably representing fallen temples."

This sketch was made one morning, during Sir Richard's annual riding tour through the country as Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces. His horses and camp were somewhere in the vicinity; and as far as he remembers, he rode over in the forenoon and sketched as long as he could bear the sun. At about mid-day a horse was brought for him, and he returned to the camp. His mounted escort carried the portfolio, while his paint-box reposed in his own capacious pocket.

The third picture reproduced shows the rock-cut Temple of Kylas (Sanskrit for "Paradise") at Ellora. Certainly, this is one of the little known wonders of the world. The temple is simply cut out from the solid flank of a mountain belonging to the Sautpura Range.

When this wonderful temple was quite finished, the architects turned their attention



THE WONDERFUL ROCK-CUT TEMPLE OF KYLAS, AT ELLORA.
From the Water-colour Drawing by Sir Richard Temple, Bart.

to the surrounding surface of rock, out of which were duly excavated three rows of chambers, for the priests, monks, and attendants. It will be noticed that from the temple to one side of the surrounding rock the excavators left a passage, or causeway. Again, by the side of the temple they left a plain black obelisk, standing out in marked contrast to the brilliantly coloured temple. Near the obelisk they also left a stone elephant, exactly life-size, and from this the general scale may be gauged.

The environment of black rock forms a splendid background to this gorgeous temple; and at the time when Sir Richard's sketch was made—that is, during the rainy season—

"This," declares my accomplished informant, "is the finest and most ornate of the modern Buddhist monasteries. The exterior of the building is quite wonderful, the roof being formed of massive bamboo poles, arranged mushroom-wise, and supported by poles 70ft. or 80ft. high. This roof has, of course, to sustain the immense weight of snow in winter."

The massive wooden pillars seen in the illustration are painted reddish-brown, but blue predominates throughout, for, owing to the proximity of Tibet, the land of the turquoise, the natives have many facilities for manufacturing blues of a beauty not attainable in other lands. The painting on

the wall is done by the fresco process, and the figures represent gods and the various powers of darkness. One of them, adorned with a blue skin, has endless flames lambent around his head, and carries lightning in his hand. Also, he is standing on a pig, which, I gather, is another and less concrete edition of the one previously referred to. The god of sacred music is also shown, fingering a guitar of unknown make. Above



GATEWAY OF BUDDHIST MONASTERY AT PAMIONCHI, IN SIKKIM.
From the Water-colour Drawing by Sir Richard Temple, Bart.

the oozing and running of water all over the rocks gave them a glossy jet colour. This sketch was made in 1862, when Sir Richard was dispatched by Lord Canning (then Viceroy of India) on a diplomatic mission to His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. Sir Richard naturally took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded him to see most of the magnificent things in the Nizam's dominions. The rock-cut temple was some hundreds of miles from the palace of this potentate, but Sir Richard was conveyed by mail-cart to the nearest bungalow, and he then rode over on horseback.

The next picture that figures here is the gateway of a Buddhist monastery in Pamionchi, Sikkim, east of the Himalayas.

these interesting personages is squatted a little Buddha, in all the serenity and calmness of abstract wisdom.

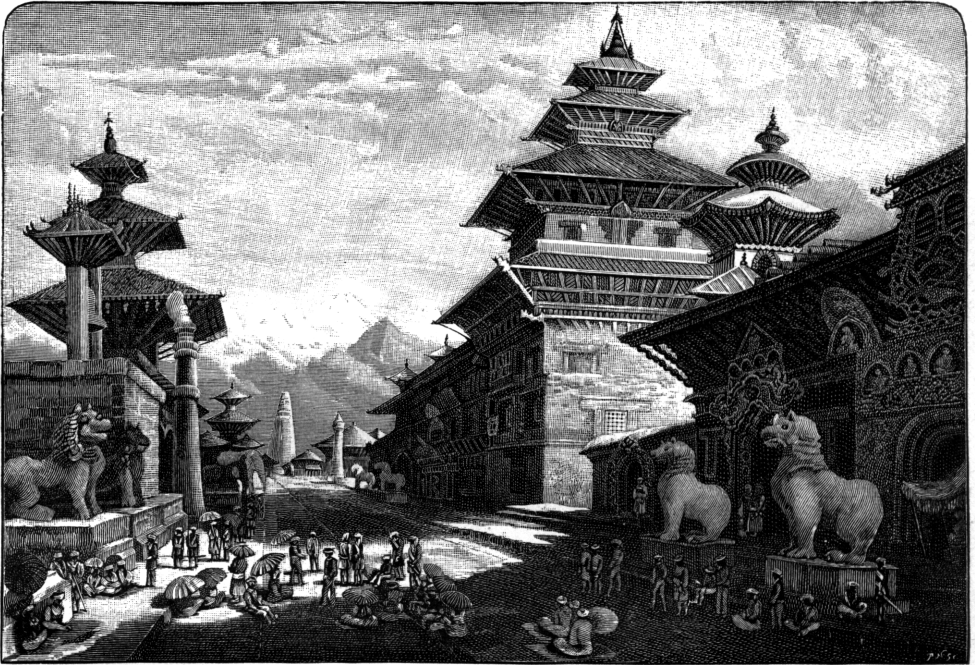
Immediately beyond the carpeted floor, which is on the brow of an ascent, is the really sublime Himalayan background. Straight up in the centre shoots a peak far higher than the summit of Mont Blanc. I asked Sir Richard about the figure squatted on the edge of the platform. This, it seems, is a priest, counting his beads and saying his prayers. Sir Richard remembered the man quite well, and actually posed him for this picture—which, by the way, was painted in 1875, when Sir Richard was touring in Sikkim. I should explain that Sikkim then formed part of the territory

under his control as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

The sketch was made in the summer season, these mountains being wholly inaccessible in tempestuous weather. Sir Richard and his staff made the ascent laboriously, spending a day and night with the monks, who have no prejudices about food, and entertained their guests right royally, the menu comprising, *inter alia*, "the best minced mutton with rice that I have ever tasted."

The last of Sir Richard Temple's pictures

teak, light grey in colour from age. The sides are made of extraordinarily long bricks, enamelled pink; and the shields, emblazoning, and windows are of brass. The griffins standing on pedestals near the basement are of grey stone from the neighbouring mountains. Beyond are seen stupendous mountains—"a good 25,000ft. above the level of the sea." The figures in the foreground are the natives who visit the place to attend service at the temple; and they greatly add to the brightness of the scene. The soldiers standing about form



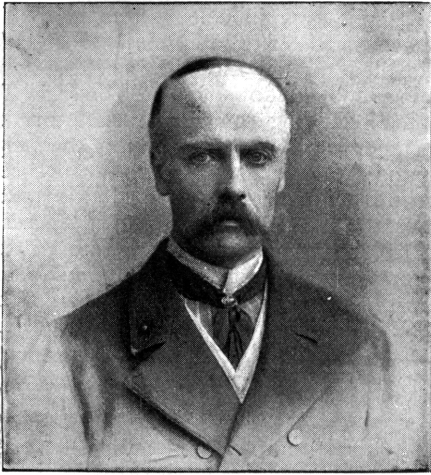
NEOPOLIS TEMPLE AT PATUN, NEAR KATMANDOO, NEPAUL.
From the Water-colour Drawing by Sir Richard Temple, Bart.

reproduced here is one that hangs in the dining-room at Heath Brow. It shows the Neopolis Temple at Patun, near the capital, Katmandoo, in the Nepaul Valley. Sir Richard believes he is almost the only European that has ever visited this weird and extraordinary district.

The style is unique among Hindu temples, simply because it is not Hindu at all, being borrowed from the Chinese. The central tower is built in compartments, and the finial is copper-gilt; the first compartment is also of copper-gilt, which takes bluish hues from verdigris under atmospheric influence. The roofs of the next three compartments are tiled, and the supports of the roof are of

part of the guard kept by the Government for the sacred place.

The sketch for this elaborate and glowing picture was made in 1875, when Sir Richard was Governor of Bengal. Nepaul was not under his jurisdiction, but, by the courtesy of the Nepaulese Sovereigns, he was taken for many unique excursions. Sir Richard was then staying with the British Resident at Katmandoo, and was driven over in the King's carriages, with his staff, to see the place shown in the picture. The versatile baronet found this subject so difficult that he thought it necessary to have the perspective tested by one of the engineer officers of his staff.



COLONEL SAUNDERSON.
From a Photo. by Chancellor, Dublin.

Now, my next appointment, on leaving Heath Brow, was with gallant, rollicking Colonel Saunderson, in Deanery Street, Park Lane. My cabman turned out of South Audley Street into this curious little thoroughfare with such a tremendous flourish (I was rather in a hurry), that an austere 'bus driver sarcastically inquired whether he "wanted to be broke up." He did not; and he said so in unmistakable language.

One may judge even from a photograph of Colonel Saunderson that he is every inch a fighter. As a *raconteur* I feel sure he is unrivalled in society, and abundant evidence of his artistic ability is here forthcoming.

Colonel Saunderson's electioneering experiences would make interesting and amusing reading, but their place, unfortunately, is not here. Those who know anything of politics, however, will infer a great deal from the fact that the gallant Colonel's political campaigns have almost invariably been conducted in the wildest parts of Ireland, where the constituents to be wooed are of the interesting type depicted here—a type supposed by intelligent people to exist only in the imagination of the bigoted caricaturist. I hinted that the portrait was possibly a little extravagant—even impossible. "Not a bit," was the cheery, vigorous rejoinder; "fellows like that are to be seen in our part in millions."

"This sketch is from life," the Colonel went on, "and I remember the man and the incident perfectly well. It was in North Armagh,

and I was unopposed; therefore my constituents were pining for a common enemy, a fight on these occasions being absolutely essential. As no enemy, common or otherwise, could be found, they philosophically turned upon each other, rent each other, and broke each other's heads with

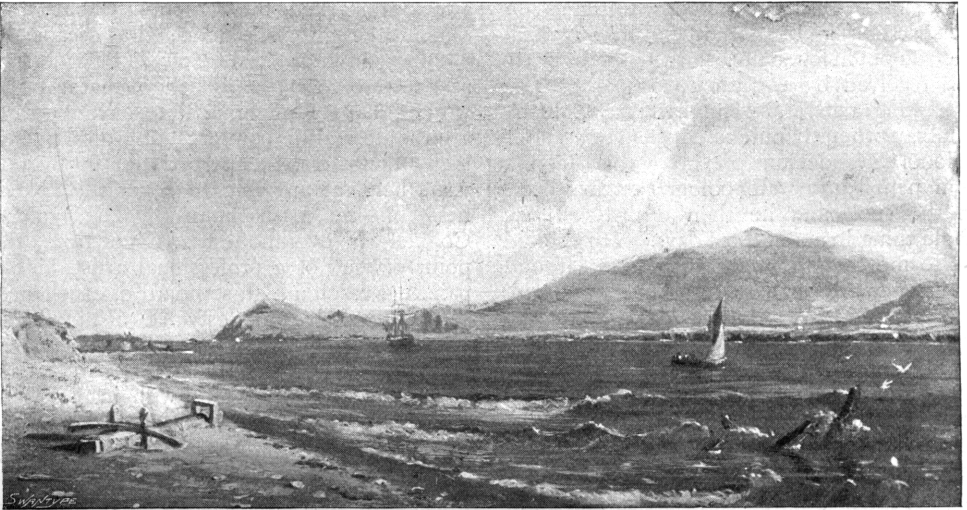


A DISSATISFIED CONSTITUENT OF THE COLONEL'S
From a Sketch by Colonel Saunderson.

orthodox blackthorns and considerable enthusiasm. When the riot had subsided somewhat, I made a speech from the window of the court-house, and was frequently interrupted by the individual whose pen-and-ink portrait I have just given you. At last he could stand it no longer. 'Shet up, Sandtherson, ye're a bore,' he called out, with intense disgust. 'Me impoolses was wid ye,' he went on earnestly, 'till ye made yer



A "LIGHTNING CARICATURE."
From a Sketch by Colonel Saunderson.



BRANDON MOUNTAIN AND SMERWICK HARBOUR.
From the Painting by Colonel Saunderson.

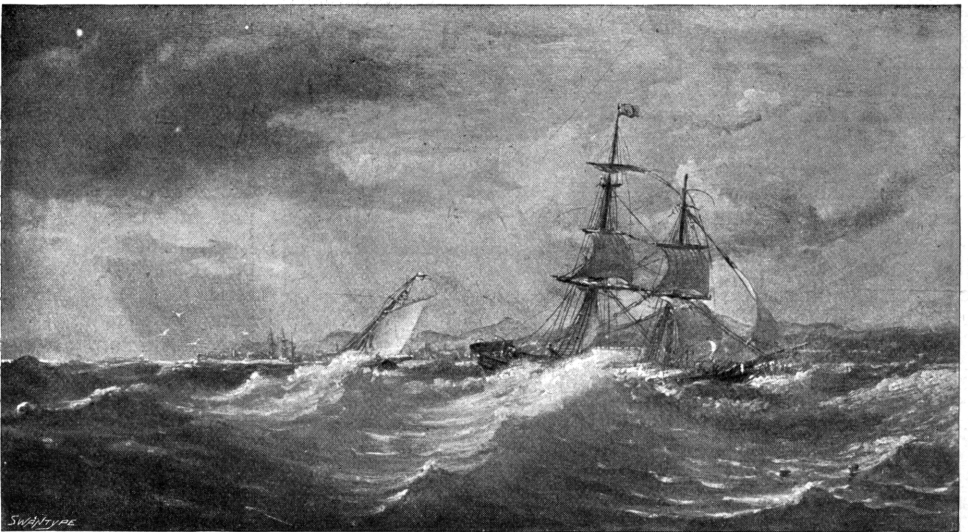
foo-poo.'" The "false step" referred to by this extraordinary Irishman is a political matter to which further reference is unnecessary. "So far as I remember the man," said Colonel Saunderson to me, "he was a unique and wonderful mass of rags."

The next drawing of the Colonel's was done specially for this article, and as it was finished while I waited, it may be described as a "lightning caricature" of Mr. Gladstone, duly signed by the artist. He worked at it diligently in his study while I examined his bicycle and the two oil-paintings that are also

reproduced. "I want to give the Old Man the fierce expression I have so often seen him wear," remarked the Colonel, anxiously, as, putting aside his cigar, he plied with still greater diligence his pen and his *finger* alternately.

The two framed oil-paintings by Colonel Saunderson that are next reproduced are sea-pieces. The Colonel is fond of the sea, and is, moreover, a practical yacht and ship designer.

The subject of the first picture is "Brandon Mountain and Smerwick Harbour"; it was



DUBLIN BAY AND KINGSTOWN.
From the Painting by Colonel Saunderson.

painted in 1868. On the coast to the left in the picture a large part of the Spanish Armada put in for shelter, in the hope of being well received by a Catholic people. "The interesting natives," remarked the Colonel, grimly, "promptly butchered them to a man." Colonel Saunderson prepared this picture from pencil and water-colour sketches done on the spot, and he then dashed off the whole thing in about three days. He pointed out to me that the waves in the foreground are somewhat smudgy. "This," he said, "happened in the following way: When the painting was finished, I put it on a chair to dry; and presently in came our old Scotch nurse with one of the babies in her arms. Not noticing that the picture was on the chair, she promptly sat on both, whereupon I sprang at her and dragged her roughly away, crying, 'You wretched woman; just look at what you've done!' The poor old girl thought I was out of my mind."

The Colonel went on to say that he made many sketches in this part of Kerry; and that the natives are fine people, "very pleasant, indeed, so long as you refrain from asking for rent. This they look upon as an impertinence which they feel justified in actively resenting."

The second oil-painting of Colonel Saunderson's depicts Dublin Bay and Kingstown. On the extreme left lies Dalkey Island, and the guard-ship is also shown. A pilot cutter, known by her flag, is gliding swiftly over the shallow sea; and it may be mentioned that in this part of the ocean there are very violent breakers far out from the shore. In the foreground is seen a collier brig running in before the wind. "She came into Dublin Bay with her sails blown

away," remarked the Colonel; "but if I remember rightly, she managed to escape."

"Do you know," said Colonel Saunderson, as I rose to go, "I really believe that if I had worked hard I might in time have become a fifth-rate marine painter; but I didn't. The many daubs I have perpetrated in bygone years help, at any rate, to cover the nakedness of my Irish home." The gallant Colonel is over-modest. Even from the point of view of a professional artist, his oil-paintings reach a high standard of excellence.

The excessive modesty of distinguished

M.P.'s was the greatest difficulty I had to contend with in preparing this article. The Hon. E. Blake "drew nothing—not even a long bow"; and Mr. A. H. Smith-Barry—to whom I looked for some piquant Irish sketches—"had never acquired the facility of drawing more than two straight lines, and those only across cheques." The Hon. George N. Curzon, our distinguished Under-

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was afraid that his "sketches and caricatures—such as they are—are hardly of a character that invites or merits reproduction." Ultimately, however, Mr. Curzon yielded, and lent the light of his countenance—in a dual sense—to my "gallery."

I called by appointment at Mr. Curzon's house—a vast and truly palatial mansion in Carlton House Terrace, and was presently ushered across the immense marble-paved hall, into the presence of the brilliant young statesman.

Mr. Curzon at once produced an old album wherein cuttings of all kinds were pasted—from poems, articles, and political speeches, to menus of famous banquets, and miscellaneous sketches by himself. One of these



"A FELLOW OF ALL SOULS."
From a Sketch by Mr. Curzon.



MR. NUGENT BANKS IN THE FIFTH FORM AT ETON.
From a Sketch by Mr. Curzon.

latter is reproduced here. The subject, Mr. Curzon tells me, is the Hon. and Rev. H. W. Bertie, Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford. The sketch is dated 1885; it was drawn during one of the meetings that were held for the purpose of discussing the business of the College, of which Mr. Curzon was also a Fellow. Mr. Bertie died last year at the age of eighty-five. "He was at Eton with Mr. Gladstone, you know," remarked Mr. Curzon; "and he was for ever reeling out anecdotes about that great statesman, whose political principles, however, were to him anathema." Here Mr. Curzon took a pen from his desk, and added a few finishing touches to the portrait, protesting the while that it was wholly unworthy of reproduction in *THE STRAND MAGAZINE*.

The second sketch by our Foreign Under-Secretary is marked in the album, "G. Nugent Bankes, author of 'A Day of My Life at Eton,' etc.—1879." This caricature was drawn on a sheet of writing-paper during school hours at Eton, the subject being at that time in the fifth form with Mr. Curzon.

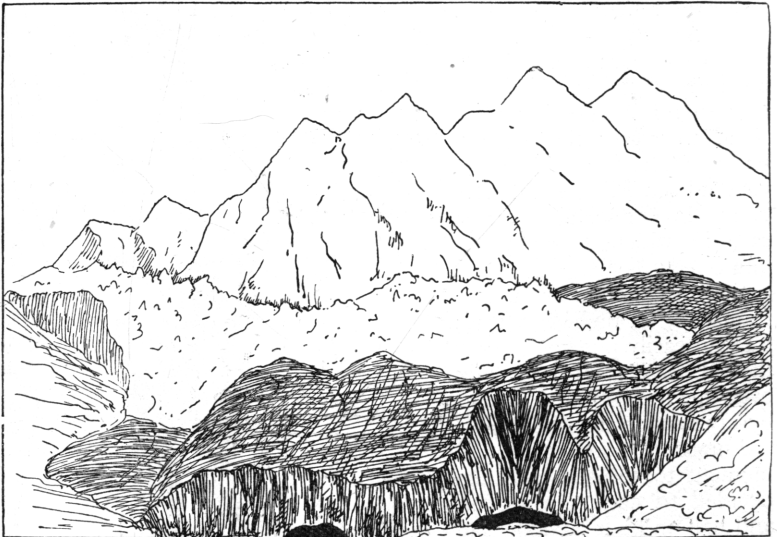
"I think it a capital portrait," remarked Mr. Curzon; "the expression's quite excellent. I remember him as a fat little chap, whose feet didn't quite touch the floor as he sat in the form. It is a remarkable fact, though, having regard to the general appearance of Mr. Nugent Bankes in this sketch, that he was possessed of an inexhaustible fund of humour, and was, moreover, extremely clever. His book, called 'A Day of My Life at Eton,' had quite

a remarkable sale, and was written while the author was yet a schoolboy at Eton."

As everyone knows, Mr. Curzon is one of the greatest living authorities on the East. After a conspicuously brilliant University career, he travelled in the remotest parts of the world for many years, one result of which was that he produced a monumental book on Persia, followed up with works on Central

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Asia, and on China, Japan, and the Korea. Naturally, therefore, I was extremely glad when Mr. Curzon hastily crossed his spacious study, and presently returned with the unique and valuable sketch reproduced here. In order that there should be no mistake about it, the eminent traveller placed the double sheet of cartridge paper on his desk, and wrote in pencil at the side: "The True Source of the River Oxus, in the Hindu Kûsh, done on the spot by G. N. C., Sept. 27th, 1894." Mr. Curzon assures me that the sketch has never before been published; and further, that no European has ever before penetrated to this remote spot. Immense mountains are seen in the background of the sketch; then comes the glacier itself, crinkled with huge bumps of ice; next come the moraine and débris, and then the sheer edge of the precipice, about 70ft. high. It will be seen that beneath the glacier are two caverns; the openings of these are about 6ft. high. Mr. Curzon tells me that, standing out a little way from the caverns, he could look right into the interior, where great masses of



THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER OXUS IN THE HINDU KÛSH.
From the Original Sketch by Mr. Curzon.

ice were being crushed together by the issuing waters.

A tiny stream flows from each cavern, and both unite a few yards from their source. Mr. Curzon was sure that if he crept into either of the caverns, the water would not reach higher than his hips. We have not reproduced here a photograph of Mr. Curzon, as a complete set of his portraits will be found on page 306.

Stories from the Diary of a Doctor.

SECOND SERIES.

BY L. T. MEADE AND CLIFFORD HALIFAX, M.D.

IX.—THE STRANGE CASE OF CAPTAIN GASCOIGNE.

[This story is based on the results of a series of investigations made in France with the modified virus of malignant disease. There is every reason to believe, from the experience gained, that in this direction lies the future cure of maladies of this nature.]

LI has for some time seemed to me that in the treatment of many diseases the immediate future holds a great secret in its hands. This secret is becoming more, day by day, an open one. I allude to the marvellous success which has already attended the treatment of disease by the elaboration and discovery of new forms of inoculation of serotheropic virus. The following story may serve as a proof of this theory of mine. One evening at my club I came across an old college chum; his name was Walter Lumsden. He had also entered the medical profession, and had a large country practice in Derbyshire. We were mutually glad to see each other, and after a few ordinary remarks Lumsden said, abruptly:—

"I was in a fume at missing my train this evening; but, now that I have met you, I cease to regret the circumstance. The fact is, I believe your advice will be valuable to me in connection with a case in which I am much interested."

"Come home with me, Lumsden," I replied to this; "I can easily put you up for the night, and we can talk over medical matters better by my fireside than here."

Lumsden stood still for a moment to think. He then decided to accept my offer, and half an hour later we had drawn up our chairs in front of the cheerful fire in my study, and were enjoying our pipes after some port. The night was a chilly one, in the latter end of November.

The wind was roaring lustily outside. It is under such circumstances that the comforts of one's own home are fully appreciated.

"You have done a good thing with your life," said Lumsden, abruptly. "I often

wish I had not married, and had settled in London—oh, yes, I have a large practice; but the whole thing is somewhat of a grind, and then one never comes across the foremost men of one's calling—in short, one always feels a little out of it. I used to be keen for recent discoveries, and all that sort of thing in my youth, now I have got somewhat into a jog-trot—the same old medicines—the same old treatments are resorted to, year in, year out; but, there, I have not come to talk of myself."

"You want to give me particulars with regard to a case?" I said.

"Yes, an anxious case, too—it puzzles me not a little."



"LUMSDEN STOOD STILL FOR A MOMENT TO THINK."

"Have another pipe before you begin," I said.

"No, thanks; I don't want to smoke any more. Now, then, this is the story."

Lumsden had been leaning back in his chair taking things easy; he now bent for-

ward, fixed me with two anxious eyes, and began to speak forcibly.

"The case, to put it briefly, is as follows," he said. "One of my best patients and staunchest friends in the parish of Wolverton is Sir Robert Gascoigne. He is a rich man; his people made their money in iron during the latter end of the last century. His great-grandfather bought a fine estate, which goes by the name of 'The Priory.' The old man strictly entailed the property, leaving it in every case to the eldest son of the house, and failing direct succession to a distant branch of the family. The present baronet—Sir Robert (the title was accorded a couple of generations ago)—is between fifty and sixty years of age. His wife is dead. There is only one son—a captain in an infantry regiment. Captain Gascoigne is now thirty years of age, as fine-looking a fellow as you ever met. For many years the great wish of Sir Robert's heart has been to see his son married. Captain Gascoigne came home two years ago on sick leave from India; he recovered his health pretty quickly in his native land, and proposed to a young lady of the name of Lynwood—a girl of particularly good family in the neighbourhood. Miss Helen Lynwood is a very handsome girl, and in every way worthy to be Captain Gascoigne's wife. His father and hers were equally pleased with the engagement, and the young couple were devoted to each other. Captain Gascoigne had to return to India to join his regiment, which was expected to be ordered home this year. It was arranged that he should leave the Army on his return—that the wedding was to take place immediately, and the young people were to live at 'The Priory.' All preparations for the wedding were made, and exactly a fortnight after the captain's return the marriage was to be

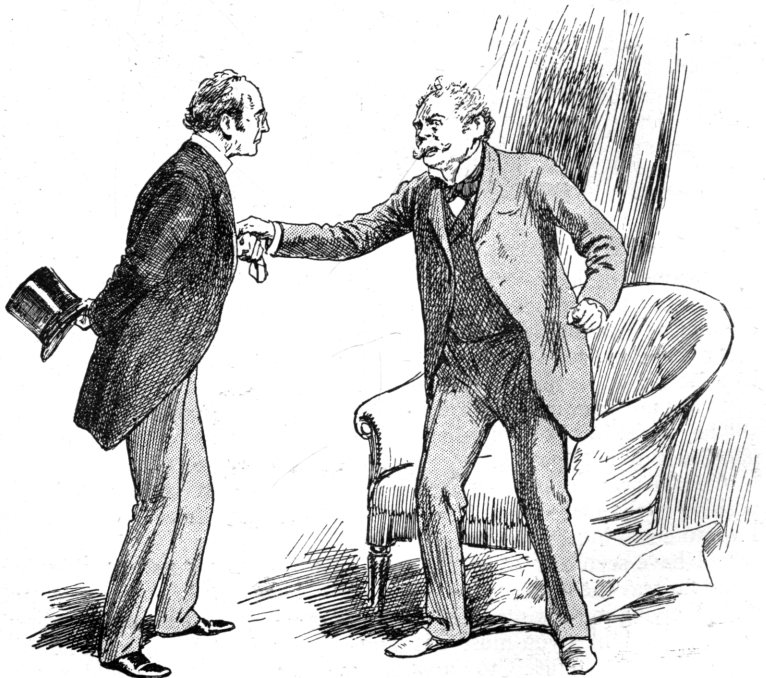
solemnized. All the reception-rooms at 'The Priory' were newly furnished, and general rejoicing was the order of the hour. Let me see: what day is this?"

"The twenty-fourth of November," I answered. "Why do you pause?"

"I thought as much," said Dr. Lumsden—"this was to have been the wedding day."

"Pray go on with your story," I said.

"It is nearly told. Gascoigne appeared on the scene looking well, but anxious. He had an interview with his father that night, and the next day went to London. He stayed away for a single night, came back the next day, and went straight to see Miss Lynwood, who lives with her father and mother at a place called Burnborough. Nobody knows what passed between the young couple, but the morning after a hurried message arrived for me to go up at once to see Sir Robert. I found the old baronet in a state of frightful agitation and excitement. He told me that the marriage was broken off—that his son absolutely refused to marry either Miss Lynwood or anyone else—that he would give no reasons for this determination beyond the fact that he did not consider his life a healthy one, and that no earthly consideration would induce him to become the father of children. The whole thing is a frightful blow to the old man, and the



"I FOUND THE OLD BARONET IN A STATE OF FRIGHTFUL AGITATION."

mystery of it is, that nothing will induce Captain Gascoigne even to hint at what is the matter with him. There is no hereditary disease in the family, and he does not look out of health. By Sir Robert's desire, I ventured to sound him on the subject. It seemed impossible to associate illness with him in any way. I begged of him to confide in me, but he refused. All I could get him to say was:—

"An inexorable fate hangs over me—by no possible means can I avert it. All I have to do is to meet it as a man."

"Do you mean that your life is doomed?" I asked of him.



"DO YOU MEAN THAT YOUR LIFE IS DOOMED?"

"Sooner or later it is," he replied; "but that is not the immediate or vital question. Nothing will induce me to hand on what I suffer to posterity. My father and Miss Lynwood both know my resolve."

"But not your reason for it," I answered.

"I prefer not to tell them that," he replied, setting his lips firmly.

"Have you seen a doctor? Are you positive of the truth of your own statement?" I ventured to inquire.

"I have seen one of the first doctors in London," was the reply. "Now, Lumsden," he added, giving me a wintry sort of smile, "even an old friend like you must not abuse your privileges. I refuse to answer another word."

"He left me, and returned to 'The Priory.' This conversation took place yesterday morning. I saw Sir Robert later in the day. He is completely broken down, and looks like a very old man. It is not only his son's mysterious conduct which affects him so painfully, but every dream and ambition of his life have been bound up in the hope that he could hand on his name and property to his grandchildren. Captain Gascoigne's unaccountable attitude completely crushes that hope."

"Why do you tell me this story?" I asked, after a pause.

"Well, with the vain hope that you may perhaps help me to get a clue to the mystery. Gascoigne refuses to fulfil his engagement on the ground that he is not in a fit state of health to marry. He refuses to tell his ailment. By what means can I get him to speak?"

"There is no way of forcing his confidence," I replied. "It seems to me that it is simply a matter of tact."

"Which valuable quality I don't possess a grain of," replied Lumsden. "I wish the case were yours, Halifax; you'd soon worm the captain's secret out of him."

"Not at all," I answered; "I never force any man's confidence."

"You possess a talisman, however, which enables you to effect your purpose without force. The fact is, this

is a serious matter—Gascoigne looks miserable enough to cut his throat, the old man is broken down, and the girl, they tell me, is absolutely prostrated with grief."

"Do you think by any chance Gascoigne has confided the true state of the case to her?" I inquired.

"I asked him that," said Lumsden—"he emphatically said he had not, that his determination was to carry his secret to the grave."

I sat silent, thinking over this queer case.

"Are you frightfully busy just now?" asked Lumsden, abruptly.

"Well, I am not idle," I answered.

"You could not possibly take a day off and come down to Derbyshire?"

"I cannot see your patients, Lumsden, unless they wish for my advice," I replied.

"Of course not, but I am on very friendly terms with Sir Robert. In fact, I dine at 'The Priory' every Sunday. Can you not come to Derbyshire with me to-morrow? As a matter of course, you would accompany me to 'The Priory.'"

"And act the detective?" I answered. "No, I fear it can't be done. If you can induce Captain Gascoigne to consult me I shall be very glad to give him my opinion. But I can't interfere in the case, except in the usual orthodox fashion."

Lumsden sighed somewhat impatiently, and did not pursue the subject any farther.

At an early hour the following morning he returned to Derbyshire, and I endeavoured to cast the subject of the Gascoignes from my mind. Captain Gascoigne's case interested me, however, and I could not help thinking of it at odd moments. The fact of the man refusing to marry did not surprise me, but his strange determination to keep his illness a secret, even from his medical man, puzzled me a good deal.

As I was not Gascoigne's doctor, however, there was nothing for it but to try and cast the matter from my mind. I did not know then that it was my fate to be mixed up in the affair to a remarkable degree.

On the following evening a telegram was put into my hand. I opened it and gave a start of surprise. It ran as follows:—

"Sir Robert Gascoigne suffering from apoplexy. Wish to consult you. Come to 'The Priory' by the first possible train.—Lumsden."

Harris waited in the room while I read the telegram.

"The messenger is waiting, sir," he said.

I thought for a few moments, then took up my *A. B. C.*, found a suitable train, and wrote a hasty reply.

"With you by nine to-morrow morning."

The messenger departed, and I went to my room to pack a few things. I took the night train into Derbyshire, and arrived at Wolverton Station a little after eight o'clock the next morning. A carriage from 'The Priory' was waiting for me, and I drove there at once. Lumsden met me just outside the house.

"Here you are," he said, coming up to me almost cheerily. "I can't say what a relief it is to see you."

"What about the patient?" I interrupted.

"I am glad to say he is no worse; on the

contrary, there are one or two symptoms of returning consciousness."

"Why did you send for me?" I asked, abruptly.

"Well, you know, I wanted you here for more reasons than one. Yesterday Sir Robert's case seemed almost hopeless—Captain Gascoigne wished for further advice—I suggested your name—he knows you by repute, and asked me to send for you without delay."

"That is all right," I answered. "Shall I go with you now to see the patient?"

Dr. Lumsden turned at once, and I followed him into the house. The entrance-hall was very large and lofty, reaching up to the vaulted roof. A gallery ran round three sides of it, into which the principal bedrooms opened. The fourth side was occupied by a spacious and very beautiful marble staircase. This staircase of white marble was, I learned afterwards, one of the most remarkable features of the house. Sir Robert had gone to great expense in having it put up, and it was invariably pointed out with pride to visitors. The splendid staircase was carpeted with the thickest Axminster, and my feet sank into the heavy pile as I followed Lumsden upstairs. We entered a spacious bedroom. A fourpost bedstead had been pulled almost into the middle of the room—the curtains had been drawn back for more air; in the centre of the bed lay the old man in a state of complete unconsciousness—he was lying on his back breathing stertorously. I hastened to the bedside and bent over him. Before I began my examination, Lumsden touched me on the arm. I raised my eyes and encountered the fixed gaze of a tall man, who looked about five-and-thirty years of age. He had the unmistakable air and bearing of a soldier as he came forward to meet me. This, of course, was Captain Gascoigne.

"I am glad you have been able to come," he said. "I shall anxiously await your verdict after you have consulted with Lumsden."

He held out his hand as he spoke. I shook it. I saw him wince as if in sudden pain, but quick as lightning he controlled himself, and slowly left the room. The nurse now came forward to assist us in our examination. My patient's face was pallid, his eyes shut—his breath came fast and with effort. After a very careful examination I agreed with Lumsden that this attack, severe and dangerous as it was, was not to be fatal, and that in all probability before very long

the old baronet would make the usual partial recovery in mild cases of hemiplegia. I made some suggestions with regard to the treatment, and left the room with Lumsden. We consulted together for a few minutes, and then went downstairs. Captain Gascoigne was waiting for us in the breakfast-room, a splendid apartment lined from ceiling to floor with finely carved oak.

"Well?" he said, when we entered the room. There was unmistakable solicitude in his tones.

"I take a favourable view of your father's condition," I replied, cheerily. "The attack is a somewhat severe one, but sensation is not completely lost, and he has some power in the paralyzed side. I am convinced from the present state of the case that there is no progressive hemorrhage going on. In short, in all probability Sir Robert will regain consciousness in the course of the day."

"Then the danger is past?" said the captain, with a quick, short sigh of relief.

"If our prognosis is correct," I replied, "the danger is past for the time being."

"What do you mean by 'the time being'?"

"Why, this," I replied, abruptly, and looking full at him. "In a case like the present, the blood centres are peculiarly susceptible to dilatation. Being diseased, they are soon affected by any change in the circulation—a slight shock of any kind may lead to more hemorrhage, which means a second attack of apoplexy. It will, therefore, be necessary to do everything in the future to keep Sir Robert Gascoigne's mind and body in a state of quietude."

"Yes, yes, that goes without saying," answered the son, with enforced calm. "Now, come to breakfast, doctor; you must want something badly."

As he spoke, he approached a well-filled board, and began to offer us hospitality in a very hearty manner. My account of his father had evidently relieved him a good deal, and his spirits rose as he ate and talked.

At Lumsden's earnest request I decided not to return to London that day, and Captain Gascoigne asked me to drive with him. I accepted with pleasure; my interest in the fine, soldierly fellow increased each moment. He went off to order the trap, and Lumsden turned eagerly to me.

"I look upon your arrival as a godsend," he exclaimed. "The opportunity which I have sought for has arrived. It has come about in the most natural manner possible. I am sincerely attached to my old patient, Sir Robert Gascoigne, and still more so, if

possible, to his son, whom I have known for many years. Of course, it goes without saying what is the primary cause of the old baronet's attack. Perhaps you can see your way to induce Captain Gascoigne to confide in you. If so, don't lose the opportunity, I beg of you."

"I am extremely unlikely to have such an opportunity," I replied. "You must not build up false hopes, Lumsden. If Captain Gascoigne likes to speak to me of his own free will, I shall be only too glad to listen to him, but in my present position I cannot possibly lead the way to a medical conference."

Lumsden sighed impatiently.

"Well, well," he said, "it seems a pity. The chance has most unexpectedly arrived, and you might find yourself in a position to solve a secret which worries me day and night, and has almost sent Sir Robert Gascoigne to his grave. I can, of course, say nothing farther, but before I hurry away to my patients, just tell me what you think of the captain."

"As fine a man as I have ever met," I replied, with enthusiasm.

"Bless you, I don't mean his character; what do you think of his health?"

"I do not see much amiss with him, except——"

"Why do you make an exception?" interrupted Lumsden. "I have, metaphorically speaking, used magnifying glasses to search into his complaint, and can't get the most remote trace of it."

"I notice that his right hand is swollen," I answered; "I further observe that he winces when it is touched."

"Well, I never saw it," answered Lumsden. "What sharp eyes you have. The swollen state of the hand probably points to rheumatism."

"Possibly," I replied.

At that moment Captain Gascoigne returned to us. His dog-cart was at the door; we mounted, and were soon spinning over the ground at a fine rate. The mare the captain drove was a little too fresh, however; as we were going down hill, she became decidedly difficult to handle. We were driving under a railway-bridge, when a train suddenly went overhead, rushing past us with a crashing roar. The mare, already nervous, lost her head at this juncture, and with a quick plunge, first to one side and then forward, bolted. I noticed at that moment that Gascoigne was losing his nerve—he turned to me and spoke abruptly.

"For goodness sake, take the reins," he said.



““TAKE THE REINS,” HE SAID.”

I did so, and being an old hand, for in my youth it had been one of my favourite amusements to break-in horses, soon reduced the restive animal to order. I turned then to glance at the captain—his face was as white as a sheet—he took out his handkerchief and wiped some moisture from his forehead.

“It is this confounded hand,” he said. “Thank you, doctor, for coming to my aid at a pinch—the brute knew that I could not control her—it is wonderful what a system of telegraphy exists between a horse and its driver; in short, she completely lost her head.”

“I notice that your hand is swollen,” I answered. “Does it hurt you? Do you suffer from rheumatism?”

“This hand looks like rheumatism or gout, or something of that sort, does it not?” he retorted. “Yes, I have had some sharp twinges—never mind now—it is all right again. I will take the reins once more, if you have no objection.”

“If your hand hurts you, shall I not drive?”

“No, no, my hand is all right now.”

He took the reins, and we drove forward without further parley.

The country through which we went was beautiful, and winter as it was, the exhilarating air and the grand shape of the land made the drive extremely pleasant.

“It is your honest conviction that my father will recover from his present attack?” said Captain Gascoigne, suddenly.

“It is,” I replied.

“That is a relief. I could not leave the old man in danger, and yet it is necessary for me soon to join my regiment.”

“Your father will probably be himself in the course of a few weeks,” I replied. “It is essential to avoid all shocks in the future. I need not tell you that an attack of apoplexy is a very grave matter—that a man once affected by it is extremely subject to a recurrence; that such a recurrence is fraught with danger to life.”

“You think, in short,” continued Captain Gascoigne, “that a further shock would kill Sir Robert?”

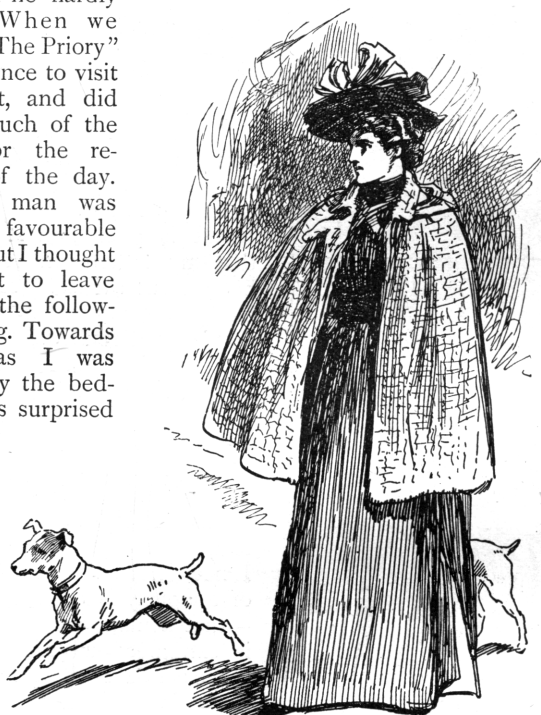
“Yes, he must on no account be subjected to worry or any mental quietude.”

I looked at the man at my side as I spoke. He was sitting well upright, driving with vigour. His face expressed no more emotion than if it were cast in iron. Something, however, made him pull up abruptly, and I saw a dark flush mount swiftly to his cheek. A girl was coming down the road to meet us; she was accompanied by a couple of fox-terriers. When she saw us she came eagerly forward.

“Take the reins, will you, doctor?” said Captain Gascoigne.

He sprang from the cart and went to meet the young lady. I guessed at once that she must be Miss Lynwood. She was a very slight, tall girl, with a quick, eager expression of face. Her eyes were dark and brilliant; the expression of her mouth was sweet but firm; her bearing was somewhat proud. I was too far away to hear what she said. Captain Gascoigne’s interview with her was

extremely brief. She turned to walk in the opposite direction; he remounted the dog-cart and suggested that we should go home. During our drive back he hardly spoke. When we reached "The Priory" I went at once to visit my patient, and did not see much of the captain for the remainder of the day. The sick man was making favourable progress, but I thought it well not to leave him until the following morning. Towards evening, as I was standing by the bedside, I was surprised



"MISS LYNWOOD."

to see Sir Robert suddenly open his eyes and fix them upon my face. Lumsden and Captain Gascoigne were both in the room. The old man looked quickly from me to them. When he saw his son a queer mixture of anxiety and satisfaction crept into his face.

"Dick, come here," he said, in a feeble voice.

Captain Gascoigne went immediately to the bedside and bent over his father.

"What's up, Dick? Who is that?" He glanced in my direction.

"I have come here to help to make you better," I said, taking the initiative at once. "I am a doctor, and your old friend Lumsden wished to consult me about you. I am glad to say you are on the mend, but you must stay very quiet, and not excite yourself in any way."

"No, no. I understand," said Sir Robert. "I have been very bad, I suppose? You have done it, Dick, you know you have."

"Pray rest, father, now," said the son; "don't think of any worries at present."

"Tut, boy, I can't rest—I'm a disappointed man, Dick—I'm a failure—this is a fine place, and it will go to the dogs—it is all your fault, Dick, and you know it. If you want to help me, you will do what I wish—get Helen here and have the marriage solemnized as quickly as possible. Oh, I know what I am saying, and I won't be silenced—there needn't be a fuss—everything is ready—the rooms furnished—the place in order. You can be married by special license—you know you can, Dick. I sha'n't rest in my grave until this thing is set right. You get Helen here and have the wedding by special license, yes, yes. There'll be no rest for me, Dick, until I know that you and Helen are—yes—that you and Helen are man and wife."

"Stay quiet, sir; stay quiet, I beg of you," said Captain Gascoigne, in a voice of distress.

"I can't while you are so obstinate—do you mean to do what I wish?"

The old man's tone was very testy.

"I will talk the matter over with you presently," was the reply; "not now—presently, when you are stronger."

There was something in the captain's voice which was the reverse of soothing. An irritable frown came between the patient's eyes, and a swift wave of suspicious red dyed his forehead.

"I must ask you to leave the room," I whispered to the younger man.

He did so, his shoulders somewhat bent, and a look of pain on his face.

"Has Dick gone for the license?" said Sir Robert, looking at Lumsden, and evidently beginning to wander in his mind.

Lumsden bent suddenly forward. "Everything shall be done as you wish, Sir Robert," he said. "Only remember that we can have no wedding until you are well—now go to sleep."

I motioned to the nurse to administer a

soothing draught, and sat down by the bed to watch the effect. After a time the patient sank into troubled sleep. His excitement and partial delirium, however, were the reverse of reassuring, and I felt much more anxiety about him than I cared to show when I presently went downstairs to dinner.

"There is no immediate danger," I said to Captain Gascoigne, "but your father has evidently set his heart on something. He has a fixed idea—so fixed and persistent that his mind will turn to nothing else. Is it not possible," I continued, abruptly, "to give him relief?"

"In short, to do as he wishes?" said Captain Gascoigne. "No, that is impossible. The subject can't even be talked over," he continued. "Now, gentlemen," he added, looking from Dr. Lumsden to me, "I think dinner is ready."

We went into the dining-room, and seated ourselves at the table. A huge log fire burned in the grate. The massively-furnished room looked the picture of winter comfort; nevertheless, I don't think any of us had much appetite—there was a sense of tragedy even in the very air. After dinner, as we were sitting over wine, Dr. Lumsden's conversation and mine turned upon medical matters; Captain Gascoigne, who had been silent and depressed during the meal, took up a copy of the *Times* and began to read. Dr. Lumsden asked me one or two questions with regard to recent discoveries in preventive medicines. We touched lightly on many subjects of interest to medical men like ourselves, and I did not suppose for a moment that Captain Gascoigne listened to a word of our conversation. He rose presently, and told us that he was going to find out how his father was now. When he returned to the room, I was telling Lumsden of one or two interesting cases which I had lately come across in my hospital practice.

"I am certain," I said, "that inoculation with attenuated virus is to be the future treatment of many of our greatest diseases."

Captain Gascoigne had come half across the room. When I said these words he stood as motionless as if something had turned him into stone. I raised my head, and our eyes suddenly met. I observed a startled, interested expression on his face. Quick as lightning an idea came to me. I turned my eyes away and continued, with vigour:—

"Such inoculation is, without doubt, the future treatment for consumption. Even granted that Dr. Koch's theory has failed,

there is every reason to hope that in that direction the real cure lies. The new anti-toxin treatment for diphtheria proves the same thing; even now there are not unknown cases where certain forms of cancer have been completely eradicated—in short, the poison eliminated from the body by means of inoculation."

"We medical men accept such theories very slowly," said Dr. Lumsden. "It will be many years before we can confidently employ them."

"Why not, if by so doing you can cure disease?" said Captain Gascoigne, abruptly.

We both looked at him when he spoke.

"Why not, if you can cure disease?" he repeated.

"Why not?" repeated Dr. Lumsden—"because we doctors dare not run risks. Why, sir, we should be responsible for the deaths of our patients if we attempted to use means of cure which were not proven, in short, established by long precedent."

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "I can't attempt to argue with you. It is my firm belief, however, that the general run of medical practitioners are over-cautious. I allude, of course, to cases which are supposed under the ordinary treatment to be hopeless. Surely if the patient wishes to try the chance of a comparatively immature discovery, it is allowable for him to do so?"

"Such a case is uncommon," I replied; "as a rule, the sick man prefers to go upon the beaten track—in other words, does not trouble himself about the treatment of his disease, leaving it entirely to his doctor."

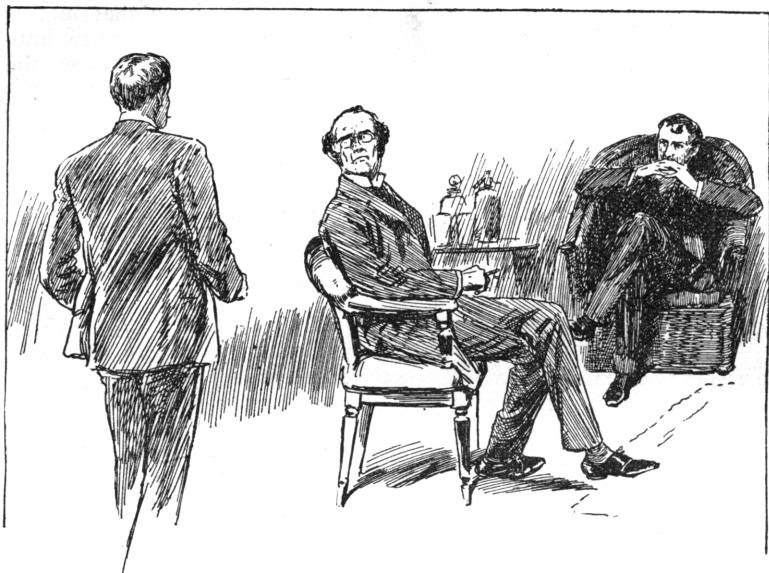
"How have you found the patient, captain?" interrupted Dr. Lumsden.

"Asleep, but restless—the nurse thinks there is an increase of fever."

"I will go and see for myself," I said, rising.

My conversation with Lumsden was broken up, and was not again resumed. We both spent an anxious night with the patient, whose case was the reverse of satisfactory. As the hours flew on, the restless wanderings of mind seemed to increase rather than diminish. The fixed idea of an immediate marriage for his son was again and again alluded to by the sick man. He was restless when Captain Gascoigne went out of the room. When he was present he was even more restless, calling him to his side many times, and asking him in strained, irritable tones if the special license had been applied for, and if Helen—as he called her—was in the house.

Towards morning the delirious and excited



"'WELL, GENTLEMEN,' HE SAID, 'I CAN'T ATTEMPT TO ARGUE WITH YOU.'"

"Thanks; but I am past counsel—the end is inevitable—unless, indeed—but, no—I must not bring myself to entertain hope. The person now to be considered is my father. You say, doctor, that if his wish in this matter is not gratified, he will die?"

"It seems extremely like it," I said. "He has evidently set his heart on your marriage—in his present diseased state the longing to see you mar-

ried has become a mania."

"There is nothing whatever for me to do then," he said, "but to lie to him."

"I would scarcely do that," I exclaimed.

"Yes you would, if you were me. I must pledge myself; he must be saved. Not another word—my mind is made up."

He left me before I could expostulate further, and returned to the sick room. The old man's arms were flung out over the bed-clothes—he was muttering to himself and pulling feebly at the sheets.

Captain Gascoigne went and sat down by the bed—he laid one of his hands on his father's, holding it firmly down.

"Listen to me," he said, in a low voice. "I have reconsidered everything. I alter my determination not to marry. I swear now, before Heaven, that if I live I will marry Helen Lynwood."

"Do you mean it, Dick?" said Sir Robert.

"On my honour, yes, father; I have spoken."

"Good boy—good boy; this is a relief. That queer scruple about your health is laid to rest, then?"

"Quite, father. If I live, Helen shall be my wife."

"You never told me a lie yet, Dick—you are speaking the truth now?"

"On my honour," said the soldier.

He looked his father full in the eyes. The sick man gave a pleased smile and patted his son's hand.

state of the patient became so alarming that I felt certain that if nothing were done to relieve him, fresh hemorrhage of the brain would set in. I went out of the room, motioning Captain Gascoigne to follow me.

"I fear," I said, "that the evident anxiety from which your father is suffering is acting prejudicially. In short, unless something can be done to relieve him, I must modify the favourable opinion which I have already given you of his case. Unless his mind is immediately relieved, he may have another attack before many hours have gone by. Such an attack will be, in all probability, fatal."

I looked hard at the captain as I spoke. He had folded his arms, and stood very erect facing me.

"What do you propose?" he said, abruptly.

"You have evidently given him distress," I said. "Can you not reconsider the position?"

He gave a short, irritable laugh. "Good heavens, doctor," he exclaimed, "don't you suppose I am man enough to accede to my father's wish, if it were possible? Can you not see for yourself that the present state of affairs is agony to me?"

"I am certain of it," I replied. "I must not urge you further. The fact is, Lumsden has told me something of your story. Only a very grave cause would make you refuse to fulfil your engagement with Miss Lynwood."

"You are right. The cause is very grave."

"You can't tell me what it is? It is possible that I might be able to counsel you."

"I believe you, Dick," he said; "I am quite satisfied—when can the marriage take place?"

"We need not fix a date to-night, need we?"

"No, no; I trust you, Dick."

"Perhaps, sir, you will try and sleep now—your mind being at rest."

"Yes, my mind is quite at rest," said the baronet—"Dick never told me a lie in his life—thank the Almighty for His goodness, I shall live to see my grandchildren about the old place—yes, I am sleepy—I don't want a composing draught—keep at my side, Dick, until I drop off. We'll have Helen here early in the morning—how happy she will be, poor little girl—I should like to see Helen as soon as I awake."

The patient kept on mumbling in a contented, soothed voice—all trace of irritation had left his voice and manner. In less than half an hour he was sound asleep. He slept well during the night, and in the morning was decidedly better—the anxious symptoms had abated, and I had every hope of his making a quick recovery.

One of his first inquiries was for Miss Lynwood.

"I am going to fetch her," said the captain.

I saw him drive off in the dog-cart. In about an hour and a half he returned with the young lady. I was standing by the patient's side when she came in. She was dressed in furs, and wore a small fur cap over her bright hair. The drive had brought a fresh colour to her cheeks—her eyes sparkled. She entered the room in the alert way which I had observed about her when I saw her for a moment on the previous day. She went straight up to the sick man and knelt down by his side.

"Well, dad," she said, "you see, it is all right."

I marvelled at her tone—it was brisk and full of joy. Had Captain Gascoigne told her the truth? Or had he, by any chance, tried to deceive this beautiful girl, in order more effectually to aid his father's recovery? Watching her more closely, however, I saw that she was brave enough to play a difficult part.

"Yes, Helen, it is all right," said the baronet. "Dick is well, and has come to his senses. That illness of his turned out to be a false alarm—he had an attack of nerves, nothing more. We'll have a gay wedding in a few days, little girl."

"You must get well," she answered, patting

his cheek. "Remember, nothing can be done until you are well."

"Bless you, child, I shall be well fast enough. Your face and Dick's would make any man well. Where is that nurse? Why doesn't she bring me food—I declare I'm as hungry as a hawk. Ah, doctor, you there?" continued the baronet, raising his eyes, and fixing them on my face. "Remember, you didn't cure me. It was Dick's doing, not yours. Dick, bless him, has set the old man right."

I left the room abruptly. Captain Gascoigne met me on the landing.

"You play your part well," I said; "but what about the *dénouement*?"

"I have considered everything," said the captain. "I shall keep my word. If I live I will marry."

I looked at him in astonishment. A glance showed me that he did not mean to confide further in me then, and I soon afterwards returned to town. Lumsden promised to write to report the patient's progress; and, much puzzled as to the ultimate issue of this queer story, I resumed my town work. I arrived in London early in the afternoon, and went immediately to visit some patients. When I returned to my own house it was dinner-time. The first person I met in the hall was Captain Gascoigne.

"Have you bad news?" I cried, in astonishment. "Is there a change for the worse?"

"No, no, nothing of the sort," was the reply. "My father mends rapidly. The fact is, I have come to see you on my own account. In short, I have made up my mind to consult you."

"I am right glad to hear it," I answered, heartily. "You must join me at dinner now, and afterwards we will go carefully into your case."

"I am anxious to catch the night mail back to Wolverton," said the captain; "but, doubtless, you can spare an hour to me after dinner, and that, I am sure, will be quite sufficient."

During the meal which followed, Captain Gascoigne was silent and *distract*. I did not interrupt him with many remarks, but as soon as it was over we went straight to the point.

"Now," he said, "I will tell you what is up. I had made up my mind to carry my secret to the grave. The strange state of affairs at 'The Priory,' however, has induced me to break this resolve. I have a double reason for confiding in you, Dr. Halifax.

First, because of what occurred last night—second, in consequence of some words which you let drop in conversation with Dr. Lumsden. These words seemed very strange to me at the time, but the more I think over them, the more anxious I am to talk further with you on the subject. In short, they have inspired me with the ghost of a hope."

"What is the matter with you?" I said, abruptly. "What is your malady?"

The captain had been seated—he now stood up.

"Help me off with this coat, doctor, if you will," he said.

I removed it carefully, but notwithstanding all my precautions I saw him wince as I touched his right arm.

"You notice this hand," he said, holding out his right hand as he spoke; "you noticed it the other day when I was driving?"

"Yes," I replied; "it is much swollen."

"It is. That could be set down to gout or rheumatism, could it not?"

"It could," I answered; "it has, doubtless, another cause."

"It has, Dr. Halifax. You shall examine my terrible disease for yourself—but first let me tell you what ails me."

He leant against the mantelpiece as he spoke—his face was very white. One or two beads of perspiration stood prominently out on his forehead. When he began to speak he looked straight at me with a frown between his eyes.

"God knows I never meant to whine about this to anyone," he said; "I meant to take it as a man—it was the state of the old governor and Helen's grief and her wonderful bravery that upset me. Well, here's the case. You must know that my mother died of cancer—the thing was hushed up, but the fact remains—she suffered horribly. I recollect her last days even now. I was a small boy at the time. The dread of cancer—of having inherited such a fearful disease—has haunted me more or less all my life. Two or three years ago in India I had a bad fall from my horse. I came down with great weight on my right shoulder. The stiffness and soreness remained for some time, and then they passed away. A year later the stiffness and soreness began to return—my shoulder-bone began to thicken—I could only move it with difficulty. I consulted some doctors, who set down the whole affection to rheumatism, and gave me ordinary liniments. The pain did not abate, but grew worse. The shoulder began to swell and soon afterwards the arm,

right down, as you see, to my finger-tips. These painful symptoms set in about six months ago. I was expected home, and all the arrangements for my wedding were complete. I was seized, however, with forebodings. As soon as ever I landed in England, I went to see the well-known specialist for tumours, Sir John Parkes. He was not long in giving his verdict. It was concisive and conclusive. He said I was suffering from osteosarcoma of the shoulder—that the disease was advanced, that the removal of the entire arm and shoulder-bone might save my life, but the disease was in such a position involving the bones of the shoulder girdle, and having already invaded the glands, that the probabilities were almost certain that it would return. I had a bad quarter of an hour with the surgeon. I went away, spent the night in town, and quickly made up my mind how to act. I would break off my engagement and go from home to die. I shrank inexpressibly from my father or Miss Lynwood knowing the exact nature of my sufferings. It would be necessary to tell them that the state of my health forbade matrimony, but I firmly resolved that they should never know by what horrible disease I was to die. That is the case in brief, doctor."

"May I look at your shoulder?" I said.

I carefully removed the shirt and looked at the swollen and glazed arm and shoulder. There was little doubt of the accuracy of the great Sir John Parkes's diagnosis.

"Sit down," I said; "from my heart I am sorry for you. Do you suffer much?"

"At times a good deal—the effort to keep back even the expression of pain is sometimes difficult; for instance, in driving the other day—but, ah, you noticed?"

"I did—I saw that you winced—little wonder. Upon my word, Captain Gascoigne, you are a hero."

"Not that," he answered. "In some ways I am a coward. This thing humiliates me as well as tortures me. I have had the instincts of the animal ever since I knew the worst; my wish has been to creep away and die alone. After what occurred last night, however, matters have changed."

"What do you mean?" I said.

"Can you not see for yourself what I mean? In a moment of extremity, I promised my father that I would marry Helen Lynwood, *if I lived*. You see for yourself that nothing will save me from the consequences of that promise except death."

"Still, I don't understand you," I answered.



"I LOOKED AT THE ARM AND SHOULDER."

"I can soon make myself plain. Do you remember what you said to Lumsden about an immature discovery—a discovery which has been known to cure diseases such as mine? You both spoke of this discovery as in its infancy—never mind, I want you to try it on me."

"My dear fellow, you must be mad."

"Not at all; this is my last chance. It is due both to Helen and my father that I should take advantage of it. In a case like mine a man will submit to anything. In short, I have quite made up my mind. Whatever the risk, I am willing to run it. The treatment may kill me; if so, I am willing to die. On the other hand, there is an off chance that it may cure me—then I can marry Helen. There is not an hour to lose, doctor. When can you operate?"

"You astonish me more than I can say," I answered. "I almost wish you had never overheard my remarks to Lumsden. I only talked over the new treatment with him as one medical man would mention a possible discovery to another."

"But you believe in it?"

"I do believe in its ultimate success."

"It has been tried, has it not?"

"In France, yes."

"And with success?"

"I am given to understand that there has been success."

"That is all right—you will try it on me?"

"My dear fellow, I am inclined to say that you ask the impossible."

"Don't say that—in my extreme case, nothing is impossible; think the matter over, Dr. Halifax. Try and picture the horrible dilemma I am in. I am suffering from an incurable complaint—I have the prospect before me, at no very distant date, of a terrible and painful death. I am my father's only son—the property goes from the direct line if I die. In order to save my father's life I promised him to marry if I lived. There is, therefore, no thought for me of a prolonged life of ill-health. I must either get well quickly or I must die. Surely a desperate man may risk anything. The treatment which I beg of you to adopt is kill or cure, is it not? Then kill or cure me."

"The treatment which you beg me to adopt," I repeated, quoting his words, "is undoubtedly death from blood poisoning, if it does not effect its end of killing your disease, not you."

"I am willing to take the risk—anything is better than the present awful state of suspense."

"Does Miss Lynwood know of this?"

"She does—God bless her! I shrank from telling her the truth—I did not know what mettle she was made of. This morning, in my despair, I confided everything to her. You don't know what stuff she has in her. She bore the whole awful truth without wincing. She said she was with me in the whole matter—it is as much at her instigation as my own desire that I now consult you. We have both resolved to be true to my father, and to keep the promise wrung from me last night by his desperate state. If I live we will marry. You see for yourself that it must be a case of kill or cure, for I cannot run the risk of bringing children into the world in my present terrible state of health. You see the situation, do you not? My father is recovering, because his mind is relieved. Everything, in short, now depends on you. Will you, or will you not, help me?"

"I ought to say 'no,'" I answered. "I ought to tell you frankly that this is not a case for me—I ought, perhaps, to counsel you to put yourself into the hands of one of

those French doctors who have already made this matter a special study—but——”

“But you won’t,” said Captain Gascoigne —“I see by your manner that you will give me the advantage of your skill and knowledge—your kindness and sympathy. On the next few weeks the whole future of three people depends. The thing will be easier both for Helen and myself, if you will be our friend in the matter.”

“Can you come again in the morning?” I said. “I must think this over—I must make up my mind how to act.”

“You will give me a definite answer in the morning?”

“I will.”

Captain Gascoigne rose slowly—I helped him into his coat, and he left the room.

As soon as he was gone, I went to see a very able surgeon, who was a special friend of mine. I described the whole case to him—gave him in brief Sir John Parkes’s verdict, and then asked his opinion with regard to the other treatment.

“It is a case of life or death,” I said. “Under ordinary circumstances, nothing could save Captain Gascoigne’s life—he is anxious to run the risk.”

“As I see it, there is no risk,” replied my friend.

“What do you mean?”

“The man will die if it is not tried.”

“That is true.”

“Then my opinion is—give him a chance.”

“I agree with you,” I said, rising to my feet. “I know you have studied these matters more carefully than I have. I will go to Paris to-morrow, and make all necessary inquiries.”

In the morning, when Captain Gascoigne arrived, I told him the result of my interview with Courtland.

“In short,” I said, “I am prepared to treat you by this new method, provided my investigations in Paris turn out satisfactory. I shall go to Paris by the night mail, return-

ing again the following night. Let me see—this is Thursday morning. Be here by ten o’clock on Saturday morning, and I shall have further news for you.”

“I have no words to thank you,” he said. “I am going back to Derbyshire now to see Helen, and to tell her what you have done.”

“You must not build absolute hopes on anything until after I have seen the doctors in Paris.”

“I will not.”

He smiled as he spoke. Poor fellow, I saw hope already returning to his eyes.

I went to Paris—my investigations turned out satisfactory. I saw one of the leading doctors of the new school, and talked over the anti-toxin system in all its bearings. His remarks were full of encouragement—he



“HIS REMARKS WERE FULL OF ENCOURAGEMENT.”

considered *sérotérapie* as undoubtedly the future treatment for cancer—three cases of remarkable cure were already on record. He furnished me with some of the attenuated virus, and, in short, begged of me to lose no time in operating on my patient. Having obtained the necessary instructions and the attenuated virus, I returned to London, and prepared to carry out this new and most interesting cure. Captain Gascoigne arrived punctually to the moment on Saturday morning. I told him what I had done, and asked

him to secure comfortable lodgings in Harley Street, as near my house as possible. He did so, and came back that evening to tell me of the result.

"To-morrow will be Sunday," I said. "I propose to begin the new treatment to-morrow morning. I shall inoculate you with the virus three times a day."

"How long will it be before the result is known?" he asked.

"I shall very soon be able to tell whether the new treatment acts as direct blood poison or not," I answered. "Your business now is to keep cheerful—to hope for the best—and to turn your thoughts away from yourself as much as possible. By the way, how is Sir Robert?"

"Getting on famously—he thinks that I have come up to town to make preparations for my wedding."

"Let him think so—I begin to hope that we shall have that wedding yet. And how is Miss Lynwood?"

"Well, and full of cheer—she has great faith—she believes in you and also in the new remedy."

"Well, Captain Gascoigne, if this succeeds, you will not only have saved your own life and that of your father, but will have added a valuable and important contribution to modern science."

He smiled when I said this, and shortly afterwards left me.

I began a series of inoculations the following morning. I introduced the attenuated virus into the shoulder—inoculating small doses three times a day. The patient required most careful watching, and I secured the attendance of my most trustworthy nurses for him. His temperature had to be taken at short intervals, and his general health closely attended to. The first day there was no reaction—on the second, the temperature rose slowly—the pulse quickened—the patient was undoubtedly feverish. I inoculated smaller doses of the virus, and these unfavourable symptoms quickly subsided.

In a week's time the treatment began to tell upon the arm—the pain and swelling became less, the arm could be moved with greater freedom, the hand became comparatively well. Captain Gascoigne appeared in every other respect to be in his usual health—he ate well, slept well, and was full of hope. I began to introduce larger doses, which he now bore without serious reaction of any kind. I had begged of Courtland to help me in the case, and he and I made

interesting and important notes evening after evening.

From what I had learned from the French doctors, I expected the cure, if successful, to take about forty days. On the twentieth day the patient suffered from great depression—he suddenly lost hope, becoming nervous and irritable. He apprehended the worst—watched his own symptoms far too closely, and lost both appetite and sleep. His conviction at that time was that the cure would not avail, and that death must be the result.

"This inaction kills me," he said; "I would gladly face the cannon's mouth, but I cannot endure the slow torture of this suspense. I told you that in some respects I am a coward—I am proving myself one."

During these anxious few days all my arguments proved unavailing—Captain Gascoigne lost such hope that for a time he almost refused to allow the treatment to be continued. I watched over him, and thought of him day and night. I almost wondered if it might be best to send for Miss Lynwood, and one day suggested this expedient to the patient.

He started in irritation to his feet.

"Do you think I would allow the girl I love to see me in this condition?" he said. "No, no, I will fight it out alone. You said it would be kill or cure. I hope, doctor, that I shall face the worst as a soldier should."

"But the worst is not here," I answered. "If you would but pluck up heart, you would do splendidly. The cure is going well; there is every reason to hope that within three weeks' time you will be as well as ever you were in your life."

"Do you mean it?" he said, his face changing.

"I do—if you will but conquer your own apprehensions."

He looked at me. The colour dyed his forehead. He abruptly left the room.

My words, however, had turned the tide. In the evening he was more hopeful, and from that time his spirits rose daily.

"The chance of cure is excellent," I said to him one morning.

"The wedding can soon take place," was my remark a week later.

At last a day came when there was no tumour to treat. The arm and shoulder were once more quite well, nothing appeared of the disease but a comparatively harmless induration. I injected large doses now of the virus without the slightest reaction of any sort.

One morning Captain Gascoigne came early to see me.

"I saw a look on your face last night which told me something," he said.

"What?" I asked.

illness through which he has passed will probably leave its sting as long as he lives."

"Probably," I answered.

"Then I have made up my mind. He must never know the storm through which



"HE MUST NEVER KNOW THE STORM THROUGH WHICH I HAVE PASSED."

"That I am cured!"

"You are," I said.

"Quite, doctor?" he asked. "Is the poison quite eliminated from my system?"

"Wonderful as it is to relate, I believe that this is the case," I replied.

"Then I may safely marry?"

"You may."

"My children, if I have any, have no chance of inheriting the horrors which I have gone through?"

"It is my belief that the hereditary taint is completely eliminated," I answered.

"Good," he replied.

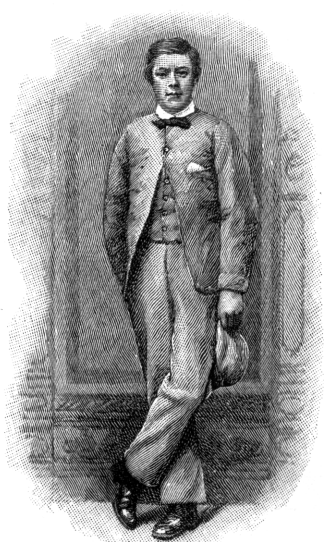
He walked abruptly to the window, and looked out. Suddenly he turned and faced me.

"My father is an old man," he said. "The

I have passed. I promised him, when he was apparently dying, that I would marry Helen if I lived. Helen tells me that my mysterious absence from home during the last six weeks has puzzled and irritated him much. He has even threatened to come to town to look for me. I mean to put this suspense at an end in the quickest possible manner. I shall immediately get a special license—Helen will come to town if I telegraph to her. We can be married to-morrow morning. Will you attend us through the ceremony, doctor, and so see the thing out? We can then return to 'The Priory' and set the old man's fears at rest for ever. Will you come, doctor? You owe it to us, I think."

I promised—and kept my word.

Portraits of Celebrities at Different Times of their Lives.



From a

AGE 12.

[Photograph.



AGE 32.

From a Photo. by
Alexander Flury,
St. Moritz.

the Bar in 1876; went on the Northern Circuit, and took silk in 1888. He was appointed judge in 1892, and received the honour of knighthood in the same year. Mr. Justice Barnes married, in 1881, the eldest daughter of the late Thomas Mitchell, Esq.

THE HON. SIR JOHN GORELL BARNES.

BORN 1848.



R. JUSTICE BARNES, a Judge of the Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty Divisions, was educated at St. Peter's College, Cambridge, and took his B.A. degree in 1868 and his M.A. in 1871. He was called to



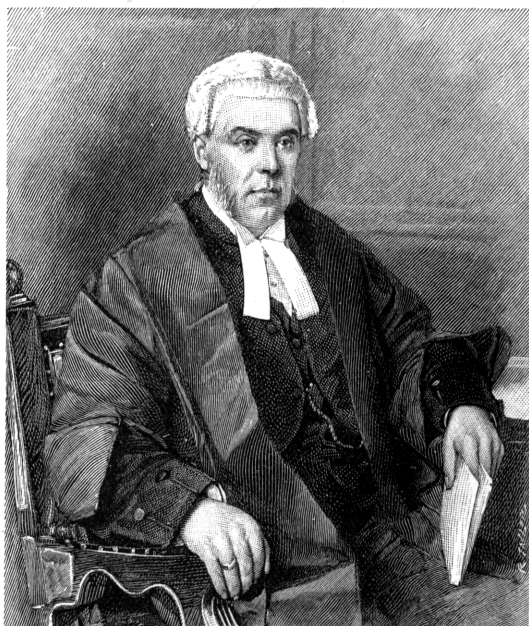
AGE 40.

From a Photo. by Antonio Gorgato, Venice.



AGE 20.

From a Photo. by W. Farren, Cambridge.



PRESENT DAY.

From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.



AGE 5.

From a Photo. by Mayall, Regent Street.

THE HON. GEORGE N. CURZON, M.P.

BORN 1859.



HE HON. GEORGE N. CURZON was educated at Eton and Balliol College, Oxford, where he made his mark as a speaker at the Union Society's debates, and afterwards as president of that famous club. He took his B.A. degree in 1884 and



AGE 14.

From a Photo. by Hills & Saunders, Eton.



AGE 17.

From a Photo. by Hills & Saunders, Eton.

Lord Salisbury in his new Government. Some interesting pictures from his hand will be found on pages 288 and 289.



AGE 26.

From a Photo. by W. W. Winter, Derby.



From a Photo. by

PRESENT DAY.

(Hay, Southampton.)

his M.A. in 1887, and was elected to the Fellowship at All Souls'. He has represented the Southport Division of Lancashire since

1886. He was Under-Secretary of State for India in 1891-92, and having travelled much in the East, is one of the first living authorities on Eastern topics. He has published "Russia in Central Asia," "Persia and the Persian Question," and "Problems of the Far East," 1894. He has just been appointed Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs by

MISS LETTY LIND.

MISS LETTY LIND, one of the most charming of our young actresses, was born in Birmingham. She made her first appearance at six years of age as *Cinderella* at Hengler's Circus, in which character we see her in our second



AGE 2.
From a Photo. by
W. Baker, Birmingham.

picture. She afterwards acted as *première danseuse* in a variety of pantomimes until twelve years old, and subsequently travelled with an entertainment until seventeen years of age. She was then engaged by Mr. Charles Wyndham at the Criterion, and played a number of small parts.



AGE 18.
From a Photo. by W. & D. Downey.



AGE 8.
From a Photo. by Letalle & Co.,
Birmingham.

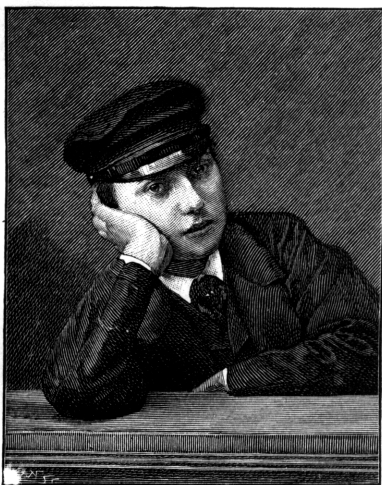
After having been on tour for some time, she accepted an engagement at the Gaiety, and has since remained under the management of Mr. George Edwardes, having, however, played incidental engagements with Sir Augustus Harris and in "Morocco Bound." She now takes the part of *Daisy Vane* in "An Artist's Model," at the Lyric Theatre.



From a Photo. by] AGE 22. [W. & D. Downey.



From a Photo. by] PRESENT DAY. [W. & D. Downey.



From a] AGE 14. [Photograph.

M. EDOUARD DETAILLE.

BORN 1848.

JEAN BAPTISTE EDOUARD DETAILLE, perhaps the greatest military painter of the day, showed at an early age a great inclination to that branch of art which has since made him famous the world over. Directly after the completion of



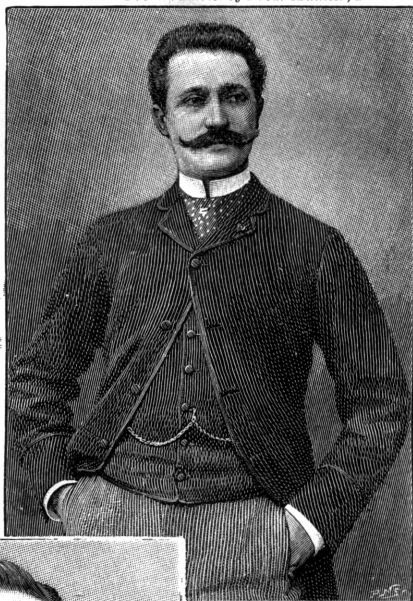
From a Photo. by] AGE 22. [Disderi, Paris.

his education he entered Meissonier's studio, whose favourite pupil he soon became. He sent his first picture to the Salon in 1867,

but scored his first real success with the "Halte des Tambours," which was much praised and admired by critics and public alike. He served in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, during which campaign he picked up much of his thorough knowledge of soldier life. M. Detaille's pictures are so numerous that space will not allow of their being mentioned here, but



AGE 26.
From a Photo. by Fred. Mulnier, Paris.



AGE 40.
From a Photo. by Nadar, Paris.

"The Charge of the Ninth Cuirassiers at Morsbronn" and "Salute to the Wounded" are no doubt familiar to many. M. Detaille recently came to London, when he painted the portrait of the Prince of Wales, which was exhibited with great success at this year's Salon.



PRESENT DAY.
From a Photo. by G. Blanc, Paris.

War Ballooning.

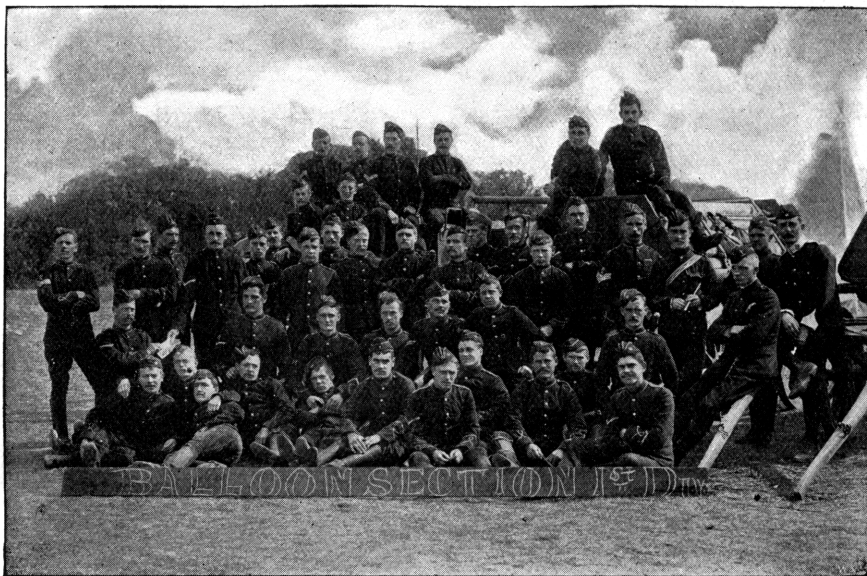
BY CHARLES KNIGHT.



THE next European war will be a strange and fearful thing; everyone seems pretty sure about that. Writers of fiction with strong imaginations and a smattering of military science are constantly producing forecasts of this fascinating subject. We learn that Mr. Maxim's guns will be very much to the fore; probably, also, Mr. Maxim's embryonic flying machines. Then we hear of messenger dogs, swarms of poisonous flies, and above all—in a dual sense—war balloons,

assisted in his very interesting work by Sergeant-Major Greener; and the accompanying group shows the entire staff of the first division of the Balloon Section when in the field, *i.e.*, these men work the balloon.

Without exception, these men are enthusiasts in their work, and although they are associated with what may be described as the most interesting and novel branch of the service, they themselves are by no means inflated. At any rate, there is very little doubt that the British taxpayer got his *quid pro quo*—and perhaps a little more—in return



From a Photo. by]

STAFF OF THE FIRST DIVISION OF THE BALLOON SECTION.

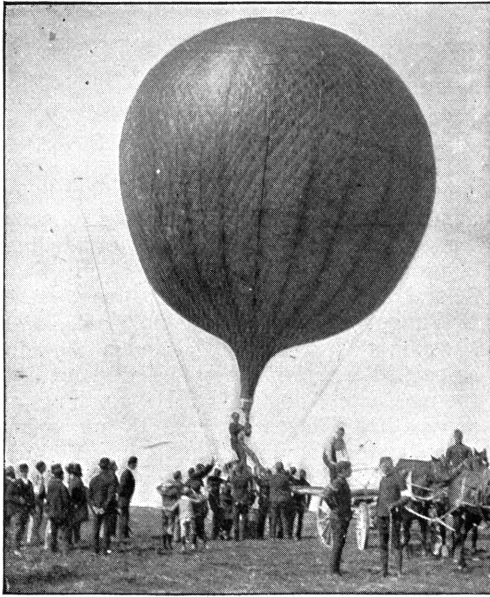
[Charles Knight..

whose mission it will be to drop charges of dynamite and things of that kind upon all and sundry whom it may be advisable to destroy.

All this leads up to the fact that we have a full-blown School of Ballooning at Aldershot, under the direction of Colonel Templer, whose name has for many years been associated with advanced military science, especially as regards the war balloon. The school at Aldershot is at present established in the Stanhope Lines, where large buildings have been erected on what was a few years ago nothing but a dangerous swamp. Colonel Templer is

for last year's ballooning grant, which was rather less than £3,000.

Colonel Templer generates his own gas from diluted sulphuric acid and granulated zinc. The lifting power of the hydrogen generated in this way is much greater than that of ordinary coal gas, but then its cost is much more. When manufactured, the hydrogen is compressed at "100 atmospheres" pressure and stowed away, so to speak, into huge Siemens steel cylinders, each averaging about 90lb. in weight. Ten of these elongated tubes are placed for conveyance to the field of battle upon admirably



From a Photo. by]

INFLATING A WAR BALLOON.

[Charles Knight.

contrived waggons, usually drawn by horses ; of course, under certain conditions, the gallant Colonel could utilize the baggage train, of which he is so great an advocate.

It takes, as a very simple calculation will immediately show, two waggon loads of gas to inflate a balloon of 10,000 cubic feet capacity, such as is shown in the accompanying illustration. Here we have the working staff, with two lieutenants in command of the section, the waggon and its team, and, lastly, the inevitable crowd of curious onlookers, with the still more inevitable sprinkling of the small boy genus, without which no operation of the kind would be complete.

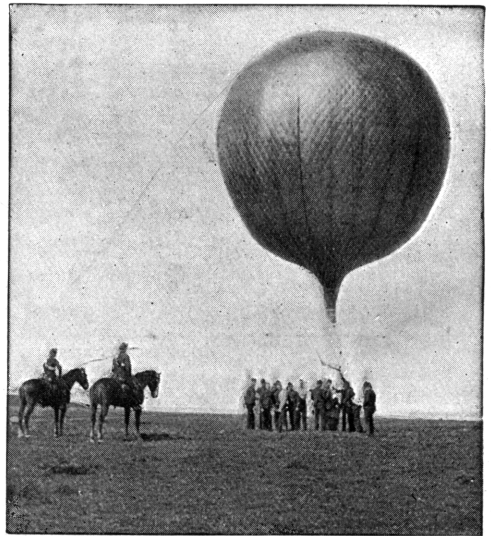
The man standing upon the car affixes one end of a screw nozzle to the mouth of a gas cylinder, while another of the engineers places the connecting tube to the nozzle of the balloon. The man on the car then gently turns on a very nicely constructed valve, which permits the compressed gas to leave the cylinder only at a very moderate rate. The balloon inflated, we will suppose that Lieutenant Hume and a brother officer are told off for the duty of reconnoitring the enemy's position. The two officers take with them a map of the surrounding country, on the scale of 2in. to the square mile. Of course, they are provided with field-glasses, and the moment they discern the enemy and are able to gauge his approximate strength, they make certain notes upon the map, using

for this purpose pencils of various colours ; one colour denotes cavalry, another infantry, and so on.

In the next picture we see that everything is ready ; the crew are on board, and the men who are holding the giant captive are awaiting the order to "Let go." The moment this order is given the immense aerostat shoots straight up like a rocket, but pressure is gradually brought to bear on the connecting rope, and when at an altitude of several hundred feet, the upward course of the huge machine is checked, and it sways

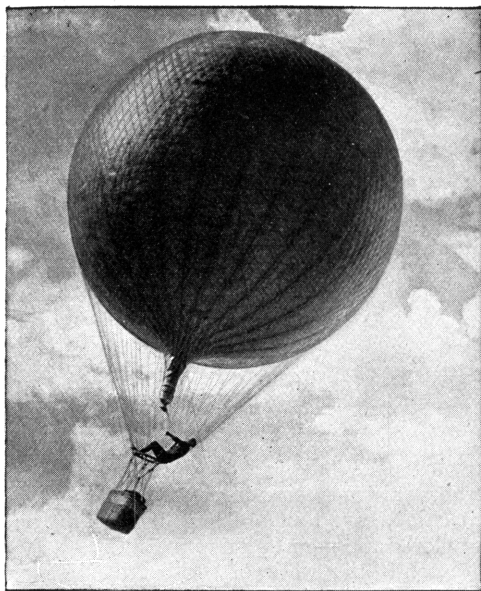
gently to and fro, while the skilful officers in the car anxiously scan the magnificent prospect of country far below them. The moment any definite information is obtained as to the enemy's movements, the map

spoken of above is marked according to such information, and then placed in a canvas bag, to which a ring is attached in such a way that it glides swiftly down the rope to the ground, where a mounted orderly is in waiting. The

AWAITING THE ORDER TO "LET GO."
From a Photo. by Charles Knight.

orderly immediately gallops off with the very latest intelligence to the General in command.

The British war balloon has long since ceased to be manufactured from silk—though this material is even now generally used by professional parachutists and aeronauts for



SURVEYING THE ENEMY'S COUNTRY.
From a Photo. by Charles Knight.

their "envelopes." After many experiments, however, a perfectly impermeable material has been manufactured from ox-gut by a series of secret processes.

It is an interesting fact that in the manufacturing shed at Aldershot, women are employed in the making of the balloons, which are for the most part of a capacity equal to 10,000 cubic feet, and have when fully inflated a lifting power of something like 700lb.

There are at present in the store-room at Aldershot thirty-two fully equipped balloons, ready at an hour's notice to go on active service; and, what is more, if, in actual warfare, they are found as useful as they have been at the Army manœuvres, their actual value will not have been at all over-estimated.

The envelope of the balloon is inclosed in a net-work of very strong cord, which is fastened below the nozzle of the balloon to a stout hoop that supports the car. The cord is manufac-

tured by a justly-celebrated firm of ropemakers in the north of England, from hemp specially grown in sunny Italy; and although it is so light that a section 100ft. long does not weigh a pound, and it is only about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. in diameter, yet it will stand a strain of 500lb. without breaking. I have myself seen this cord practically tested by Sergeant-Major Greener on a dynamometer. The car of the war balloon accommodates a couple of men, and it is made of very strong wicker-work. It is 2ft. 3in. deep, the same in width, and 3ft. 6in. long. This car is fastened to the hoop above by very strong ropes; and, of course, for reconnoitring purposes, it is supplied with a grapnel, a captive rope, a photographic outfit, and many other articles that are carried in the common or Crystal Palace variety of balloon.

In the next illustration is seen the most direct and valuable mode of communication between the officers in the car of the war balloon and the forces below. I refer to telephonic communication. In the picture it will be seen that a light waggon carries the necessary electrical plant. On the occasion of my own visit to the scene of operations, I watched an orderly gallop up to this wonderful piece of portable mechanism, and he roared into the cart, as it were, "Any fresh information?"

The officer, with a truly astonishing quickness, gained most important news, receiving a



From a Photo. by] PORTABLE RECEIVING-STATION OF THE AERIAL TELEPHONE. [Charles Knight.

reply which ran as follows: "There is a large body of cavalry on your right flank, behind the hill, deployed ready to charge the supports." This message came in an amazingly sharp and articulate voice—a veritable *vivâ-voce* message from the clouds.



From a Photo. by]

WAR BALLOON DIRECTING CAVALRY.

[Charles Knight.

The accompanying reproduction shows the Aldershot war balloon "Talisman" reconnoitring at such an altitude as to command the entire radius of country over which the manoeuvres are being conducted. It will be noticed that on the windward side the balloon is rather flat, instead of convex; this indicates that there is a vacuum, so it is coming down to be refilled. The body of cavalry seen is being wholly guided by instructions received from the "Talisman."

The system of reconnaissance by pencil-coloured maps dropped from the balloon at present holds the field against photography; but it must not be assumed that the camera is a wholly futile ally on the battlefield. As a matter of fact, most successful and valuable pictures are constantly obtained, showing in most beautiful detail the nature of the surrounding country and the obstacles to be encountered. You must remember, though, that it takes at least half an hour to photograph, develop and dry the negative, and print a proof; from which it is obvious that information given to the commanding officer by this means is a little stale, as it conveys to him rather where his opponent *was*, than where he is at the moment.

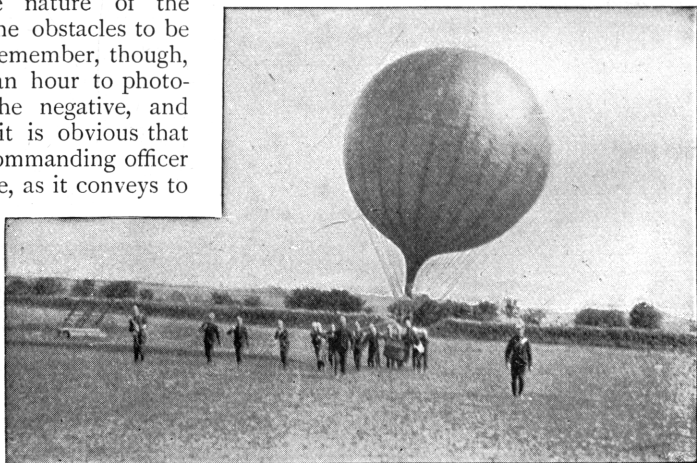
When the officers in the balloon have procured all the information possible regarding the movements of the enemy, the war balloon is brought down, and is towed into some sheltered valley by

the men of the balloon section, as is seen in the last photograph reproduced here; then, of course, the balloon is placed under sentry protection. Not that much protection is needed, save, perhaps, from the derision of the small boy genus before referred to. I distinctly remember seeing a balloon-

towing party followed by a troop of *gamins*, who, far from being impressed by the huge machine, gave tongue from time to time and implored the men to "tike it 'ome."

Such is the work of the captive balloon. There are times, however, when Sergeant-Major Greener and other officers release the captive and travel to different parts of the surrounding country at a speed of perhaps forty miles an hour. As one might imagine, however, this speed is hardly noticed by the occupants of the balloon.

At the Aldershot School of Ballooning, selected officers go through a course of instruction at appointed seasons; and, altogether, we may feel assured that we are well to the fore, as a nation, in the science of belligerent aeronautics.



From a Photo. by]

THE TOWING PARTY AT WORK.

[Charles Knight.



FROM THE ITALIAN OF E. DE AMICIS. BY ALYS HALLARD.

[Edmondo de Amicis, one of the most striking of Italian writers now living, was born at Oneglia in 1846, and educated at the University of Turin. At the age of seventeen he proceeded to the Military College at Modena, and then entered the army as a sub-lieutenant. He took part in the expeditions against the brigands in Sicily in 1866, and there gathered the practical experience which he afterwards turned to use in such thrilling yet pathetic stories as that which we now reproduce, and which is in all probability based on actual fact. In 1871 he quitted the army in order to devote himself entirely to writing, and has continued to produce a succession of stories which have given him a European reputation.]

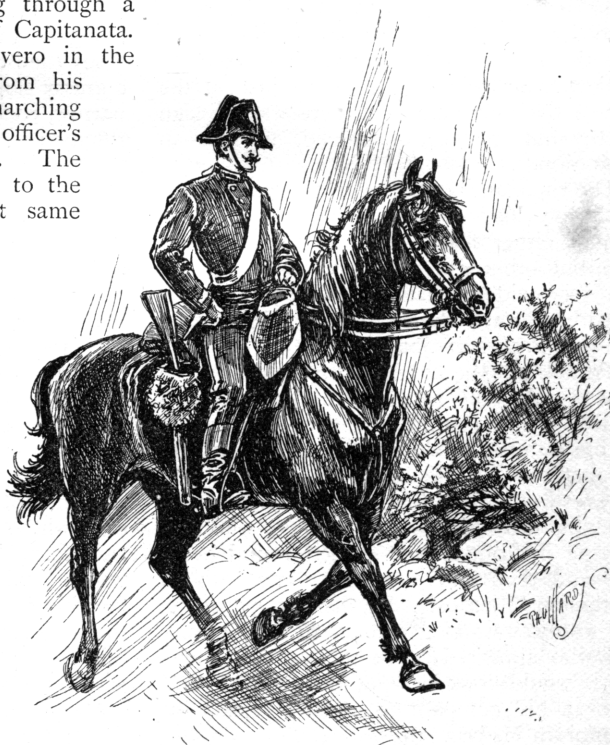


It was during the summer of 1861, when all Europe was stirred to indignation by the accounts of the terrible atrocities committed by the Italian brigands, that, one morning towards the end of July, soon after sunrise, a mounted rifleman was riding through a lonely valley in the province of Capitanata. He had started from San Severo in the night to take some message from his colonel to the commander of a marching regiment, and he now had this officer's answer hidden inside his tunic. The purport of the said answer was to the effect that at eight o'clock that same morning the regiment was going to make an expedition in search of a certain band of brigands said to be hiding in some secret caves of the mountains.

The messenger was a young man of some thirty years of age, tall and slight, with singularly intelligent eyes, pointed moustache, and that deep furrow between the eyebrows which is usually a sign of thoughtfulness. His general expression denoted a gravity beyond his years, and the large hat with pointed brim which he was wearing seemed to add to his somewhat melancholy appearance. His erect bearing and his alert movements attested to his vigour and energy. He had put his horse to a trot, and was riding

along a winding pathway, looking first on one side of him and then on the other, gazing at the deserted pasturage, at the steep mountains, and the limpid sky, and hearing as he went along no other sound than that of his horse's feet and the clinking of his own sword.

Suddenly, just as he was passing between



"HE HAD PUT HIS HORSE TO A TROT."

two high hedges, he saw a flash of fire and heard a detonation. He seized his pistols quickly and drew his horse up. The poor animal stumbled and fell, and at the same instant the soldier was himself seized by strong hands. A man had sprung out from amongst the bushes, followed quickly by a second, and then by a third. It was absolutely impossible either to parry the blows he received or to get his poor horse up. He himself was flung down on the ground in the struggle, and had only just time to fire at his adversaries, and during the volume of smoke which followed to crumple up the piece of paper he was carrying, and which contained the message, and put it in his mouth.

In another minute the brigands had bound his hands behind his back and strapped on to his shoulders his sword, cloak, and the baggage he had been carrying on his horse's back. They next dragged the poor dead beast to the other side of the hedge, endeavouring thus to leave no trace of the struggle which had taken place, and then pushing their wretched prisoner on in front of them they continued their way, by turns threatening, mocking, or swearing at him.

When they had walked for about half an hour across the fields, thinking that they were far enough off the beaten track not to run the risk of any surprise, they began to slacken their pace. They were just at the foot of the mountain, and there was no sign of any hut, cottage, or, indeed, any human habitation.

The rifleman, bent though he was beneath the heavy load he was carrying, showed no sign of either fear or anger. His face was pale, but otherwise there was no change; it was very evident that he had been perfectly prepared for any danger which might assail him on his perilous journey.

To fall into the hands of brigands in those days of ferocious retaliations meant certain death. The solemnity of this last hour of his life stamped itself upon the prisoner, and anyone who had looked that moment into his eyes would have felt that death was surely hovering near him. The brigand who was walking in front of him turned round every now and then and glanced at him with an expression of curiosity and distrust, whilst the one who was walking side by side with him, and who appeared to be the captain of the band, would look now at his prisoner and now at his companions, with a gleam of triumph in his cruel eyes.

"Stop a minute!" he said, suddenly; and then, hanging his gun over the shoulder of

the rifleman, he continued, in a mocking tone: "Carry that for me."

"Ah, yes! and mine, too," said the second brigand, imitating his chief.

"Why don't you give him yours?" asked the captain, turning towards the third brigand, who was walking behind, and who looked younger than the others.

"I'd rather keep mine myself," he replied; "one never knows whether one may need it."

"Coward," muttered the chief, with a look of contempt; and then, turning to the prisoner, and laying his hand on his shoulder, he said: "My friend, will you kindly tell us where you were going when we had the good fortune to make your acquaintance?"

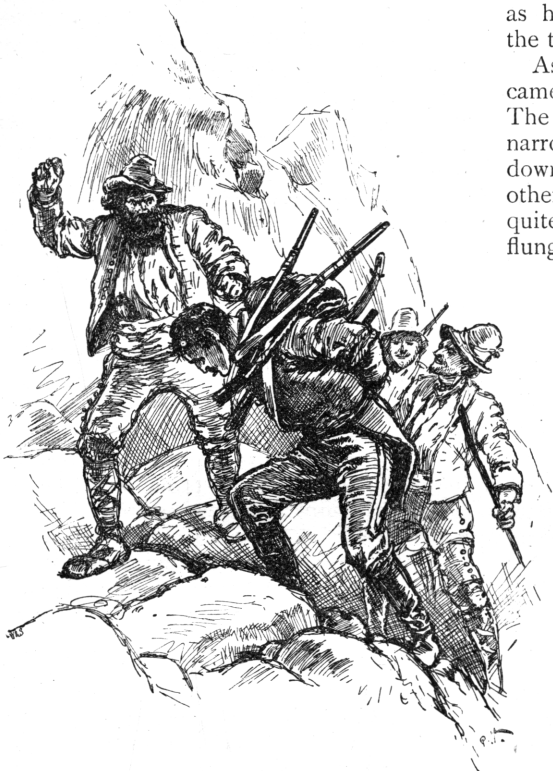
There was no answer, and the brigand, gathering a stick from the hedge, gave the rifleman two or three sharp cuts across his fingers. This took no effect, however, and the brigand threw away his stick and said, with a laugh:—

"Ah! you'll speak before you've finished, poor wretch. Others have tried that on, before you, and you will probably do as they did in the end. You are made of flesh and blood, and when you are hurt you'll cry out, never fear!"

With this he pushed the poor fellow brutally along a path which led beside a stream. They then crossed a bridge, turned round by a grassy slope, and began to mount a steep, narrow, rocky path up the mountain. The rifleman was nearly strangled by the straps of the guns, his hands were tied behind him, and his uniform was so heavy that he was bathed in perspiration. As he continued the steep ascent he kept stumbling and nearly falling on his knees, and every time the brigands would strike or kick him, shouting, in their cruelty:—

"Get on with you, idle dog! When you happen to capture any of us you tie us to your horses; so now it is your turn, my fine Piedmontese!"

Half-way up the mountain they halted, as they had arrived at their destination. In a certain spot where the rock had given way, and where huge blocks had rolled down and formed a kind of natural stronghold, was a hollow place, the rocky mountain forming a roof, and the brigands had made themselves here a hiding-place. They had filled up the gaps with huge stones and with bushes. Within the inclosure they had hollowed out niches to store their provisions, and they had also made some steps, from the top of which they had a view of the mountain slope.



"GET ON WITH YOU, IDLE DOG."

The entrance to this hiding-place was a narrow opening just wide enough for a man to pass. On the outside there was nothing to betray that the place was inhabited, whilst when once inside, besides being a regular robbers' den, it was quite a fortified station. In the niches were glasses, pewter-cups, saucers, knives, and loaves of bread; on the sharp edges of the rock were hung bags and bottles, in a corner was a heap of ashes and fire-brands, which were still smouldering, whilst here and there on the ground were heaps of straw and some rugs. All around, above and below, were rocks, great steep precipices, enormous masses which seemed to be hanging in the air, with here and there shrubs growing out of the crevices.

In the distance one could see the vast plain, and then beyond that other mountains. A man, who was standing on the top of the steps which the robbers had made in the interior of the cave, was looking out for them. His elbows were resting on the rock, and his face was almost hidden by two great stones, forming a kind of loophole. On catching sight of the prisoner, he clapped

his hands with joy, and watched him eagerly as he advanced, struck at on each side by the two brigands.

As the little band approached, the sentinel came out to the entrance to welcome them. The rifleman was pushed brutally through the narrow opening with such force that he fell down in the middle of the cave, whilst the others followed him, swearing, shouting, and quite out of breath with their ascent. They flung down their hats, weapons, and bags, and sitting down on the stones began to wipe their foreheads.

"Well, we've brought one with us, at any rate," exclaimed the chief, turning towards the comrade who had been left in charge.

"Yes, and you've taken him alive, that's more. What about his horse, though?" he continued, glancing at the rifleman's spurs.

"Ah, don't mention that," answered the chief, sullenly. "Curse it, I hit the beast instead of the man," and in a few words he described their attack. "Oh, well, it doesn't matter; it was a master-stroke anyhow," and then approaching the prisoner he took stock of him and afterwards proceeded to relieve him of his cloak and sword. He examined his hat inside and out, and then, laughing, threw it into one of the corners.

While the brigands were turning out the contents of his purse, the poor rifleman glanced from one to the other of his capturers with that slow, solemn gaze that one sometimes sees in the eyes of a dying person, whose thoughts seem to have soared away beyond this world and its cares.

The faces he saw certainly looked to him worthy of the place where they lived and the profession they followed. The chief was a man of some forty years old, short and stout, with shoulders which nearly touched his ears, and bow-legs. He was altogether a broad-set, powerful-looking man, and he made up in width for what he was wanting in height. He had black hair and a bushy beard, and, indeed, his face was so covered with hair that only a narrow piece of forehead and the top of his cheeks were visible.

The other two looked like brothers—they had the same narrow foreheads, fox-eyes, a mouth with thin, cruel lips, and a pointed chin. Both of them were short, slight, and sinewy. They, too, like their chief, had a sly, deceitful, demoniacal expression in their eyes—a sort of mixture of superstition and

the wretched man, with haggard, dilated eyes, looked straight before him out at the mountains. The brigands laughed heartily at his distress.

"The best of it is that he does not utter a word. What's the meaning of that, now, do you suppose? Is it his pride?"

"No, no, it is his modesty!"

"Or fear?" suggested the chief.

The rifleman shook his head resolutely, and one of the brigands sprang to his feet.

"No, he isn't afraid? Well, we'll see for ourselves. Look here," he continued, addressing his companions, "he was probably on his way with some message, giving details about us, and we have lost a good deal too much time already. We'd better just make him tell his precious secret, whether he wants to or not."

The soldier started slightly at these words, and then drew his head up defiantly as though to show that he was ready for them. The three brigands planted themselves in front of him, and if at that moment they had noticed their sentinel they would have seen that he was trembling like a leaf and that his face was white with terror. He turned away slightly in order not to witness the scene, but the captain happened to glance at him and reminded him of his post, so that he was forced to keep his face in their direction.

"Now, then," said the captain to his victim, in a tone that admitted of no refusal, "where do you come from?"

The prisoner frowned, and, glancing at his interlocutor with an expression which denoted a will of iron, he did not attempt to answer. Without a word, the captain raised his clenched fist, and struck the prisoner a terrific blow on his cheek.

"Are you going to answer?"

The man bent his head a minute, for the blood was oozing out of his mouth, and then, looking steadfastly at the brigand with imperturbable pride, he made a sign of refusal. The captain bit his lips with anger, and with a forced smile, as he glanced at his men, he drew a knife from his pocket and placed the cold steel blade on the throat of the prisoner. He shuddered involuntarily, and the brigand said, cruelly, "Oh, don't be afraid, there is nothing to fear, nothing whatever."

As he said this he pressed the point of the knife and drew a line down the victim's body, from which the blood started and fell drop by drop to the ground.

"Ah! we shall see now!" laughed the

chief, brutally, and the young sentinel hid his face in his hands.

"Are you going to speak?" asked the captain.

The rifleman looked at the blood, and then, lifting his head again, he gazed once more proudly and coldly at the wretch who had tortured him. The three monsters looked at each other more in surprise than anger this time.

"Do you want to die, fool?" howled the captain, at length. "Don't you see that you are here in our power, and quite alone, without a chance of anyone lifting a finger for you? Why, we could kill you or tear you to pieces like a dog! What are you trusting to? Do you imagine anyone will come here to rescue you? Speak, I say. Let us, at any rate, hear you say something."

The rifleman remained mute, and in a fury of baffled rage one of the brigands raised his dagger to strike him dead. The captain seized his arm and said:—

"No, that will not answer our purpose. We want him to tell us what I have asked him."

The monster then grasped a heavy gun, and let it fall with as much force as possible on to the prisoner's foot, so that it broke the bone. He uttered a cry of anguish, and his features contracted in a spasm of excruciating pain, but immediately mastering himself by a strong effort of will, he stamped on the ground with his wounded foot, and, lifting his head, cried out, "No!"

All three of the brigands then threw themselves on him, and would have torn him to pieces in their wild fury but that the young sentinel, made bold by the horrors he had just witnessed, cried out like one beside himself:—

"Kill him—kill him, for mercy's sake! Shoot him dead, but for goodness sake don't torture him like that!"

The brigands let go their hold of the prisoner, so stupefied were they at their companion's audacity. Their stupor, however, was of short duration; the captain stalked across to the daring young sentinel and, with a blow on the back of the neck, knocked his head against the rock wall. Half-stunned, he took up his old attitude, but as he glanced out to the mountain slope he started, and then leaned forward and kept his eyes fixed on what he saw there.

The chief did not, fortunately, bestow a second look on him, but, livid with rage, went back to the poor martyr, and, seizing him by the head with one hand he threatened

him with the other, as he said, between his clenched teeth :—

"Listen, fool. It was an evil moment for you when you thought of defying me. You do not know me, but I can tell you I have tortured men who have had double your strength. You have no idea how I can make you suffer. I could go on martyring you until to-morrow, without killing you, but just leave you life enough to realize what suffering is. . . . I warn you not to try me any further. . . . You had better speak and answer my questions before my blood is up, as if once you drive me to extremities—why, it will be the worse for you."

Still there was no reply, and the brigands were now beside themselves. With a cry of rage and a ferocious look in their eyes, they rushed at the prisoner like three wild beasts, and cut at him with the points of their daggers, only stopping every now and then in their murderous work to tell each other to strike gently, for they feared lest the victim should escape them and be released by the merciful hand of Death.

"For goodness sake, do not kill him," cried the young sentinel, terrified to death himself by the frightful scene, and looking now at the murderers and now out at the open country, and shouting in his anxiety to cover the sound of approaching footsteps.

"Wait, wait, I tell you! If you kill him, you will never know what he had to say. Try him again; look, he is making a sign that he will speak. You can kill him afterwards; I, myself, will stab him to the heart with my dagger. Ah! keep your knives off him, strike him only with your hands. Fools—do you not see that you are killing him?"



"THEY RUSHED AT THE PRISONER LIKE THREE WILD BEASTS."

Without ceasing to shout, he looked once more outside—quite near the rocky entrance to the cave—and then, springing down from his post, his expression changing to one of ineffable scorn and indignation, he cried: "Cowards! cowards! three of you against a half-dead man!"

"Confound you!" shouted the chief, raising his dagger to strike the young sentinel.

"Too late!" exclaimed the other, in a transport of joy, and, pointing to the entrance, he said, "Look!"

Warned by these words, the two brothers, quick as thought, threw a cloak over their victim, whilst the captain snatched up his gun and advanced towards the mysterious enemy who was thus penetrating into his hiding-place.

There was a clang of weapons, a rush of heavy footsteps, the flash of bayonets, and then a whole band of riflemen entered, and, surrounding the robbers, quickly disarmed them. There was dead silence for a minute, then only broken by the heavy breathing of the panting soldiers.

"Help the poor dying man!" exclaimed the young sentinel, who, like

his companions, had been seized, and was now kneeling on the ground, his hands under the bayonet of one of the riflemen.

"A dying man! Where is he?" demanded the captain of the new-comers, striding forward, and looking round the cave.

"There—there in that corner."

The soldiers looked, but could see nothing at first, coming in as they had done out of the broad daylight.

"Under that cloak," said the young sentinel, eagerly.

The captain, with the eyes of all his men

fixed on him, advanced and lifted up the cloak. There was a cry of horror as the sight was revealed. The wretched prisoner was on his knees, his arms tied behind him, his face livid as Death itself.

"Release him instantly!" ordered the captain. "Give him something to drink."

Three riflemen rushed forward, unfastened the chains which bound the poor sufferer, and

would not—they all threw themselves on him like wild beasts—I saw it all—oh, heavens! oh, heavens!——"

"But who are you?" exclaimed the captain. "How is it you speak like that?" and then suddenly, an idea striking him, he lifted the young brigand's hat off his head.

"A woman!" burst from all the riflemen's lips in amazement.



"A WOMAN!"

then, laying him gently down on the ground, supported his head whilst they held a cup of wine to his lips. The other soldiers, exasperated at what they saw, struck the brigands with the butt-end of their guns.

"Stop!" called out the captain, and then turning to the sentinel he said: "What can you tell us about this? Quick, speak."

The rifleman who was guarding the young sentinel let go his hold and the man stood up.

"When was this poor fellow taken? Tell the truth, mind, for you have not long to live."

"This man!" began the young brigand, in a terrified tone, for he was still trembling all over with horror—"this rifleman—they took him this morning—and brought him here—they wanted him to speak—and he

"Yes, a woman!" she repeated, her eyes all wild and haggard. "They captured me a fortnight ago. They held their knives to my throat and made me come with them here. My hands are clean of all blood, though—I swear it. I had no choice but to come or be killed—tortured. I am from San Severo!"

"Why did you not at least kill one of these wretches—you could have shot one of them, surely?"

"I was afraid to—they would have tortured me, I tell you—you do not know what they are capable of. I thought to-day I should lose my reason when I saw it all—oh, heavens! But that man there is a hero; he has endured it all—and he would not tell them a word—not a word!"

"Drag the cowards across to the feet of their victim," ordered the captain.

The riflemen dragged the three brigands across to where the wounded man was lying, his head now all bound up in a handkerchief. The captain of the troop leaned down towards the sufferer, and said :—

"You are saved now, and are amongst comrades. Courage ! Your enemies are on the ground at your feet."

The sufferer tried to lift his head, and a faint smile played over his lips. He opened his mouth, and something black and white fell on the ground.

"Whatever is that ?" exclaimed the captain.

"The colonel's answer !" replied the wounded man, faintly.

"To the Colonel of San Severo ? The reply I gave you this morning ?"

The rifleman nodded. The captain knelt down himself, and taking the man's hands in his, grasped them warmly. For a few minutes words failed him—he was too deeply moved to be able to trust his voice. Then turning round towards his men, he said :—

"On your knees, every one of you, before this brave man. He was taking a letter to the colonel, announcing the hour of our departure, and telling just where we were going. If the brigands had read it, they would have escaped us. He put the letter in his mouth in order not to betray us, and he has borne all their cruelty in silence. We have a hero amongst us, my men, a hero, a martyr, and a brave, noble-hearted soldier."

"Yes, yes, captain," cried the men, with deep feeling.

"Get down and kiss the dust before him, vile cowards, curs !" said the captain to the three brigands, and one after the other, writhing on the ground like serpents in the strong grasp of the riflemen, were the brigands thus humiliated.

"Captain," said the woman to the chief of the soldiers, gazing at him with her wild eyes full of pleading. "I could have given the

signal when I saw you in the distance. I did not do so. . . . I let you get here and take them by surprise. . . . In return for this grant me a favour—I cannot go back to my village . . . let your men shoot me when they shoot these wretches !"

"No !" interposed the wounded man, energetically, and with a supreme effort. "You—you have a work of mercy before you—"

"What—oh, Madonna—what is there I can do ?"

She knelt down near to the poor sufferer, her hands clasped together and her head bent forward to catch his words.

"Do not leave me—go with me."

"Where ?"

"Everywhere !"

The spectators gazed at each other in amazement at the man's strange words.

"Ah ! you do not know all," he said ; "you have not seen all my wounds. Look !"

He lifted the handkerchief which bound his forehead, and a cry of horror and pity burst with one accord from all lips. The wretched man was blind !

"Death to the cowards," shouted the riflemen, seized with a frenzy of indignation.

The captain's voice could scarcely be heard in the mad tumult which followed. The riflemen seized the assassins and dragged them away out of the cave, and the captain followed to give the necessary orders.

"You have saved my life," said the wounded man, stretching his hands out blindly towards the woman, who was still kneeling beside him ; "will you not finish your work of pity ?"

She bowed her head for a minute, and then, lifting her eyes up to the blue skies, she answered gently, but firmly, putting her hand into his :—

"The rest of my life is yours." And then, just at this moment, there was a volley of firing from the valley, which seemed to seal their engagement, the noble compact which was to bind the life of the compassionate woman with that of the hero.

The Evolution of Cricket.

BY ALFRED T. STORY.

Hail ! Cricket, glorious, manly British game,
First of all sports, be first alike in fame !



O wrote James Love, the comedian, in his "Cricket: An Heroic Poem," published in 1770. It was at that time—more than a century ago—essentially a "British," that is a national, game ; and since then it has, if possible, become a more British, and, to judge by the position it occupies in the public mind and in the public Press to-day, a more glorious one, too.

At the time when Love was poetizing upon the subject, cricket was in a transition state, and was gradually developing into the form in which we now play it, but the evolution was not yet complete. It had, indeed, many steps still to take, although it had long grown out of the infant stage, and one may add the feminine stage too, if, indeed, the original and the developed forms did not continue to exist side by side.

Much has been written as to the origin of cricket, but, like the games of chess and of cards, its infancy is lost in obscurity. There are many theories as to its origin, some persons being of opinion that it arose out of the ancient game called "stool-ball" ; others that it developed from "club-ball," a pastime similar to rounders ; while a third party regards a northern form of "tip-cat," called "cat-and-dog," as the undoubted original of the game. There is much to be said in favour of each theory, and perhaps the truth is that in its general evolution cricket took something from each of the above-named pastimes.

Strutt, in his "Sports and Pastimes" (1810), says, "I have been informed that a pastime called 'stool-ball' is practised to this day in the northern parts of England, which consists simply in setting a stool upon

the ground, and one of the players takes his place before it, while his antagonist, standing at a distance, tosses a ball with the intention of striking the stool, and this it is the business of the former to prevent by beating it away with his hand, reckoning one to the game for every stroke of the ball. If, on the contrary, it should be missed by the hand and strike the stool, the players change places." In a note, Strutt adds that he believes the player might be caught out.

That such a game was played in the north, that is, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, so recently as the early fifties, I myself can testify, as I have played it as a child. The game was played, however, not as in our illustration of "stool-ball" (No. 3), taken from "A Pretty Little Pocket-Book" (1770) for children, but with the stool lying on its side, so that the ball was bowled at the seat of the stool. It would usually be played in a garden path with a parti-coloured leather ball stuffed with sawdust, which was purchased at the sweet-stuff shop for a halfpenny.

I do not recollect what the game was called ; but I know the little wooden stools that were used were called "crickets" (No. 1). They were very different—these crickets—from the more finished and ornamental stools, and were formed of a thick piece of wood, round or square, which constituted the seat, and three or four legs, as the case might be. They may be seen in the houses of the poor, almost anywhere in the north, and are rough, tough, and very durable pieces of furniture, admirably suited for children to play with and knock

about.* It may be worth while to note, too, that I once saw a nurse-girl improvise a game of "stool-ball" in a very peculiar way to amuse a little boy. She placed a small foot-stool, or cricket, upside down, laid a comb across from



NO. 1.—A CRICKET.



NO. 2.—CLUB-BALL. (14TH CENTURY).

* In Todd's "Johnson" we find : "Cricket : a low seat or stool."

one leg to another like a wicket bail, rolled up a rag ball, and gave it to the boy to bowl with, while she defended her odd wicket with a hair-brush. She held the bat until the



NO. 3.—STOOL-BALL.

little bowler knocked down the comb, when she took the ball, and the youngster handled the hair-brush bat.

Strutt refers to a number of ancient English games in which a ball was used, as, for instance, goff (or golf), club-ball, trap-ball, and others. Cambuca was the same as goff, the Latin name being applied to it, says Strutt, in the reign of Edward III., deriving the denomination, no doubt, from the crooked club or bat with which it was played. The bat was also called a "bandy," from its being bent, and hence the game in England is frequently called "bandy-ball." Strutt gives a drawing of two persons playing at "bandy-ball," and the form of the bandy, as used early in the fourteenth century, from an MS. book of prayers, beautifully illuminated and written about that time.

"Club-ball," says Strutt, "was a pastime similar to goff, but clearly distinguished therefrom in an edict of Edward III." The dif-

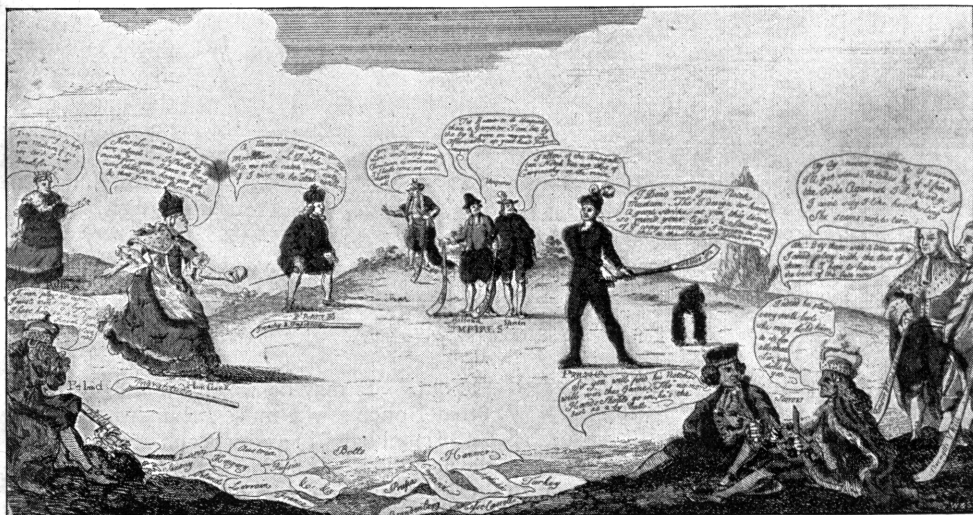
ference appears to have consisted in the one being played with a curved bat, and the other with a straight one. Strutt gives two engravings representing persons playing at club-ball. The first (No. 2), from an MS. in the Bodleian Library, dated 1344, exhibits a female figure in the action of throwing the ball to a man who elevates his bat to strike it. Behind the woman in the original delineation appear several other figures of both sexes, waiting attentively to catch or stop the ball when returned by the batsman. Strutt's other specimen of "club-ball," taken from a drawing more ancient than the former, a genealogical roll of the Kings of England of the time of Henry III., in the Royal Library, presents two players only. It does not appear how the game was determined.

The third game to which cricket is held to



NO. 5.—BOYS' CRICKET (1770).

have some analogies, and from which it is thought by some to have been derived, was called "cat-and-dog," and was formerly played much in the north. It is referred to in the Badminton "Cricket." Two holes were cut at a distance of thirteen yards. At



NO. 4.—THE CROWNED HEADS OF EUROPE: A SATIRICAL PRINT OF 1757.



NO. 6.

each hole stood a player with a club called a "dog." A piece of wood, called a "cat," 4in. long by 1in. in circumference, was tossed to one of the dogmen. His object was to keep the "cat" out of the hole.

There are those who hold that we get single wicket from "club-ball" and double wicket from "tip-cat," under its old name of "dog-and-cat," and there is much to be said for that view.

One of the earliest mentions we have of the game of cricket is in Florio's "Italian Dictionary," published in 1595, in which we find *sgrittare* defined as "to make a noise as a cricket; to play cricket-a-wicket and be merry." "Cricket-a-wicket" means cricket at the wicket. Now, Professor Skeat derives the word "cricket" from the Anglo-Saxon *cricc*, a staff, and *et*, the diminutive; hence, a little staff. Can it be that cricket grew originally out of a domestic game, in which children threw a ball at the garden wicket (*i.e.*, gate) while it was defended by a player with a crooked stick or club, a sort of

club-ball or rounders? The question is undoubtedly an interesting one.

Curiously enough, one of our illustrations (No. 13) is from a small German almanac of 1802, in which the game is designated "Thor-ball." The first syllable, "Thor," signifies "gate" (*i.e.*, "wicket"); so that the game appears to have made its first appearance in the Fatherland, not as "cricket," but as "wicket-ball." Note, too, that the earliest wicket was 2ft. in width.

See the illustration (No. 5) of a boys' game of cricket from "A Pretty Little Pocket Book" (1770), though this does not give a fair idea of what the bat had become by this time in politer cricket, as, for instance, in the hands of Royalty, as represented by Prince Adolphus Frederick (No. 6).

But whether such be the origin of the game or not, it certainly seems to owe something to "tip-cat." In agreement with this view, we have it on the authority of antiquaries of the game that the ball was originally adopted because the cat would not go far enough. The cat was cut down sharper and sharper, until it was at last



NO. 7.—MISS WICKET AND MISS TRIGGER (1778).

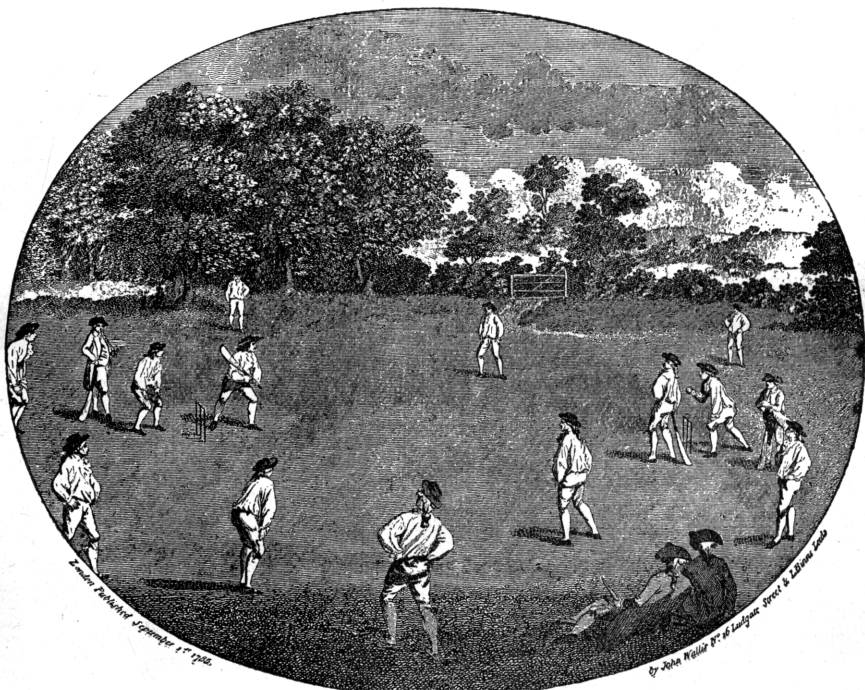


NO. 8.—“A MATCH PLAYED BETWEEN THE COUNTESS OF DERBY AND SOME OTHER LADIES OF QUALITY AND FASHION, AT SEVEN OAKS, KENT, 1779.”

reduced to a badly-shaped ball, and the first cricket ball was consequently a wooden one. Another link with “tip-cat” is to be found in the fact that, in the game of cricket as originally played, there was a round hole between the stumps, into which the ball had to be placed to put a man out.

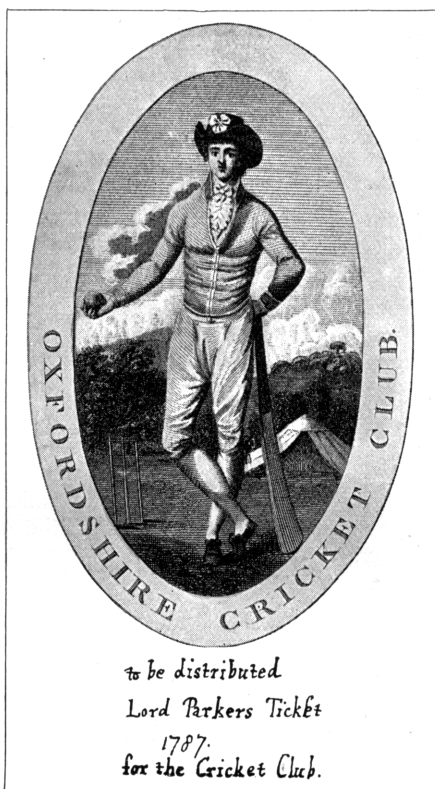
It was not until the early part of last century that the national game assumed anything like the form in which it is now played. Indeed, it is from that time that the changes

gradually began to be made in it which developed it into what we may call the scientific game of the present day, and we may be sure that those changes would not have taken place unless the game had been growing more and more popular. Thus we learn that in the reign of Queen Anne the wickets were placed about the same distance apart as now, namely, 22yds., that is, the length of a surveyor’s chain, but the stumps were only 1ft. high and 2ft. wide,



NO. 9.—“THE NOBLE GAME OF CRICKET” (1785).

surmounted as now with a bail. At that period, too, a feature existed to which reference has already been made. Between the stumps a hole was cut into the ground large enough to contain the ball or the butt end of the bat or club. In running a notch the striker was required to put his bat in this hole instead of touching over the popping-crease, as is now the rule. The wicket-keeper, in putting out the striker when running, was obliged, when the ball was thrown in, to place it in this hole before the adversary could reach it with his bat. Many severe injuries of the hand were the consequence of this regulation, and the present mode of touching the popping-crease was substituted. About the same period the wickets were increased to 22in. in height, and narrowed to 6in. in breadth, and the wicket-keeper was required to put the wicket down, having the ball in his hand. Subsequently (1775) the middle stump was added, and the bails divided into two pieces. Not long afterwards the stumps were given an additional height of 2in., while at the same time the width of the wicket was increased to 7in. The "Noble Game of Cricket," as played in 1785 (No. 9), will give an idea of what it was like at this time.



NO. 10.

Meanwhile a set of rules had been formulated for the game. Cricket had no written laws till 1770. The earliest copy we have of them is dated February 25th, 1774. They were drawn up by a committee of noblemen and gentlemen (including Sir Horace Mann, the Duke of Dorset, and Lord Tankerville), at the "Star and Garter," Pall Mall. At this time the crease was cut, not painted. "No ball," so far as crossing the crease went, was just like "no ball" to-day. "Indeed," says one authority, "the game was essentially the game of hockey, except that if a ball were hit, the other player may place his body anywhere within the swing of the bat, so as to hinder the bowler from catching her, but he must neither strike at her, nor touch her with his hands."

One of the influences for progress in the game was the formation of the old Hambledon Club, which is the earliest we hear of that was of any account. It was



NO. 11.—"THE LARKINS CHILDREN" (1790).

established about 1750, though the game was played at some of the public schools long previous to that. The Hambledon played at first on Broadhalfpenny Down, afterwards on Windmill Down, both close to the famous Hampshire village, and for many years the club played the same part with regard to other clubs that the Marylebone Club does now. An old print represents the Hambledon eleven in their club costume of knee-breeches, stockings, and buckled shoes, with velvet caps; by no means so elaborate a uniform as that of Lord Winchilsea's team, which used to play in silver-laced caps.

Some idea of the dandified costume of the period may be gained from the figure on the admission card of the Oxford Cricket Club (No. 10).

The Hambledon Club numbered a lot of famous cricketers amongst its members—men who were giants in their time, and left their mark upon the game. One of them, David Harris, was the cause of the alteration in the shape of the "bat." Up to nearly the end of the eighteenth century its form was one to which the term "club" might more properly be applied. In all the old prints of the game the shape of the bat varies from a hockey-stick or that of a volute, or rather of an old-fashioned dinner-knife, curved at the back, bulging out at the front, and having a broad curl at the end, as will be seen by comparing the satirical prints of the "Crowned Heads of Europe" (No. 4), and "Miss Wicket and Miss Trigger" (No. 7). The shape of the bat as it obtained in 1790 is shown in the group from the picture of "The Larkins Children" (No. 11), and may be compared with the development it had reached in 1800, as seen in the hands of the boys from the picture, "The Soldier's Widow" (No. 12).

With such a weapon as the bat in its curved form a man must hit—block he could not; and a length ball must inevitably have

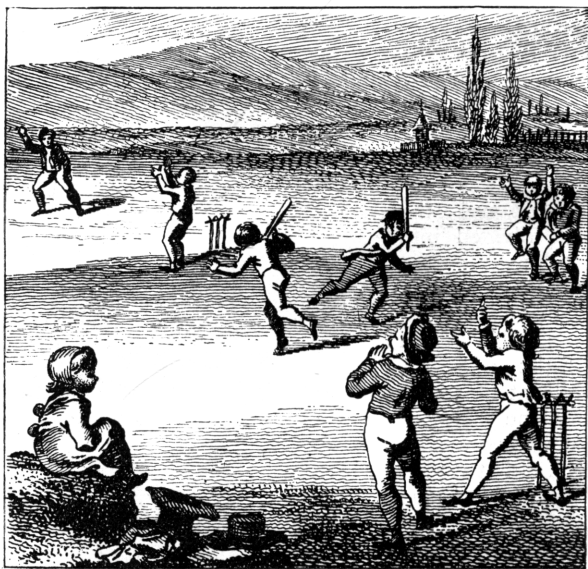


NO. 12.—GROUP FROM THE PICTURE OF "THE SOLDIER'S WIDOW" (1800).

lowered his stumps. The crooked bat was not ill-adapted to the style of play that originally obtained, which, being purely offensive, required something with which a good deal of hard hitting could be got through; but with the development of the game the curved bat was bound to go. The change not only revolutionized cricket, but opened up the mysteries of modern scientific batting.

As already said, Harris was the cause of the alteration of the shape of the bat, as being, if not the inventor, at least the introducer of the "length" balls, and against his bowling the old hockey-stick arrangement was of no use. The introduction of "length" bowling had a vast deal to do with the progress of the game. Not only did it lead to the alteration of the bat, but the

stumps likewise had again to be raised in height. By 1814 the wickets had grown to 26in. by 8in., and in 1817 they were once more altered to 27in. by 8in., at which they now stand. At the same time, to compensate for the extra inch on the stumps, an extra 2in. was given to the distance between the



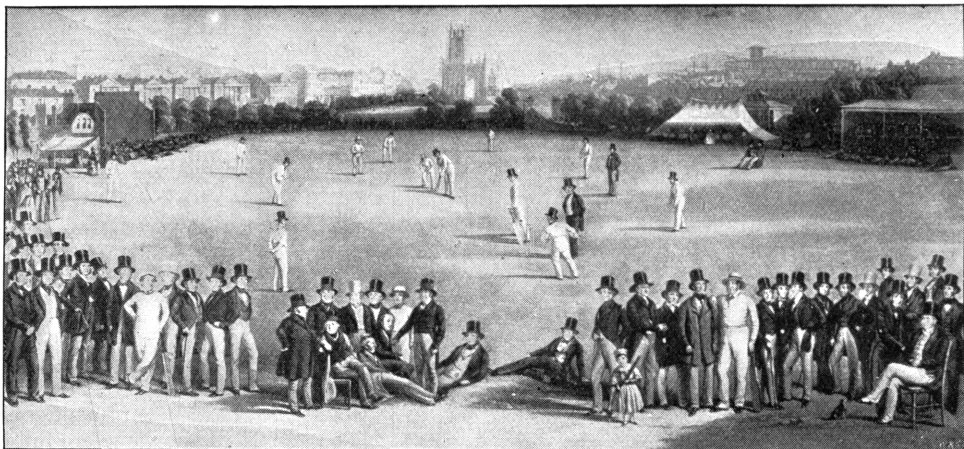
J. B. R. Hambrogh Del.

NO. 13.

Thorball.

(1802.)

G. Schute sculp.

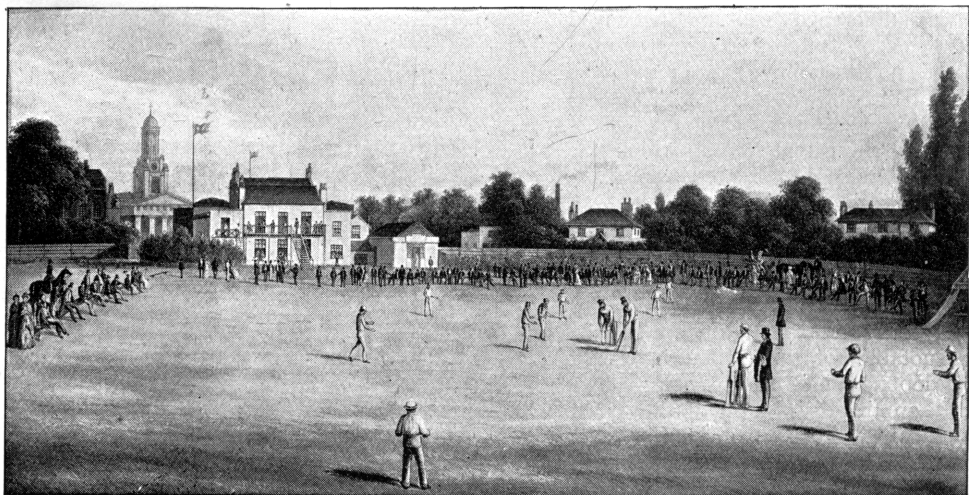


NO. 14.—CRICKET AT LORD'S (1820).

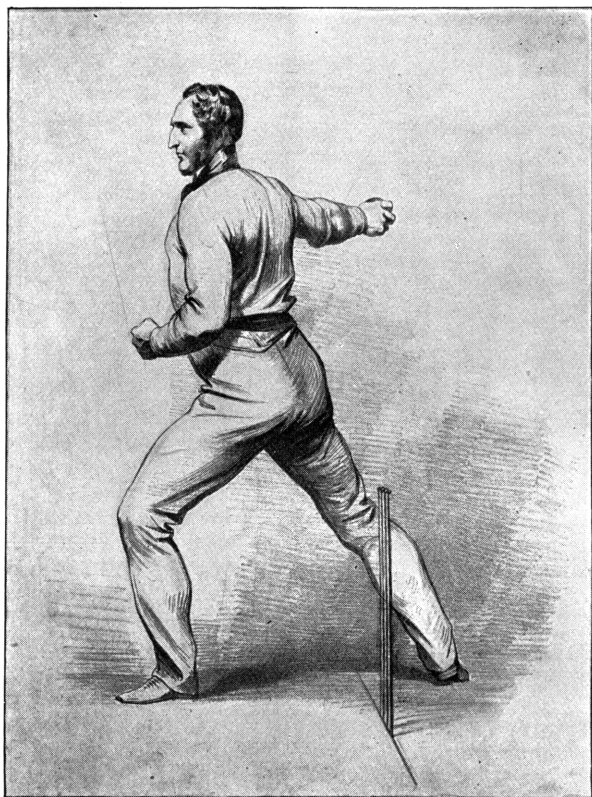
creases, thus increasing it to 4ft. Old Small, a famous cricketer in his day, and "one of the best hands at the draw that ever lived," says Dr. Grace, is said to have made the first straight bat.

It would take an entire article by itself to go into the question of bowling; but it may be mentioned here that a very important renovation in that respect, namely, round-arm bowling, came into force about 1825. It had frequently been tried before, but had been condemned as unfair; and it was not until the underhand style was found easily playable that the round-arm came in to stay. Tom Walker, one of the "famous men" of those days, was among the most celebrated of early round-arm bowlers. The Hambledon Club, however, objected to the new thing, and the so-

called "throwing" bowling was placed under the ban. It had among its opponents, too, such men as John Nyren (born 1764) and Lambert (born 1779), the two worthies, by the way, to whom we are indebted for the earliest printed instructions as to how to play the game—both of whom viewed it with disfavour, Lambert declaring that, if continued, it would have a degenerating effect. But it won its way in the end, and was very generally adopted about the time mentioned. Willes was perhaps the first to put into practice the style of bowling identical with that now so universally adopted, though the delivery then was not so high as it subsequently became. The new style of bowling led to other minor, though not unimportant, changes. On the hard and uneven surfaces upon which cricket was then frequently



NO. 15.—SURREY AT THE OVAL (1820).



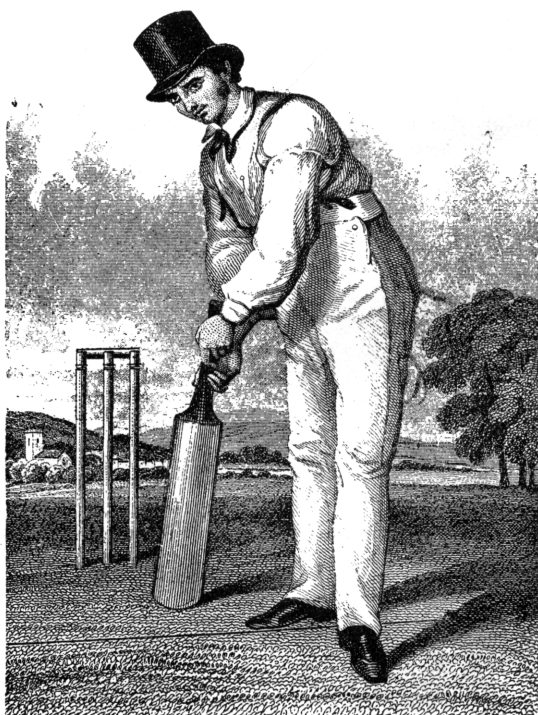
NO. 16.—MR. ALFRED MYNN.

played, it became so dangerous that recourse was had to leg-guards and batting gloves, articles which previously had not been unknown. Incidentally, too, it led to the better preparation and more careful keeping of the grounds devoted to the game. In this respect a vast difference will be perceived between the pitches as represented in the noble game of 1743 and the subsequent ones at "Lord's" (No. 14) and the "Oval," 1820 (No. 15).

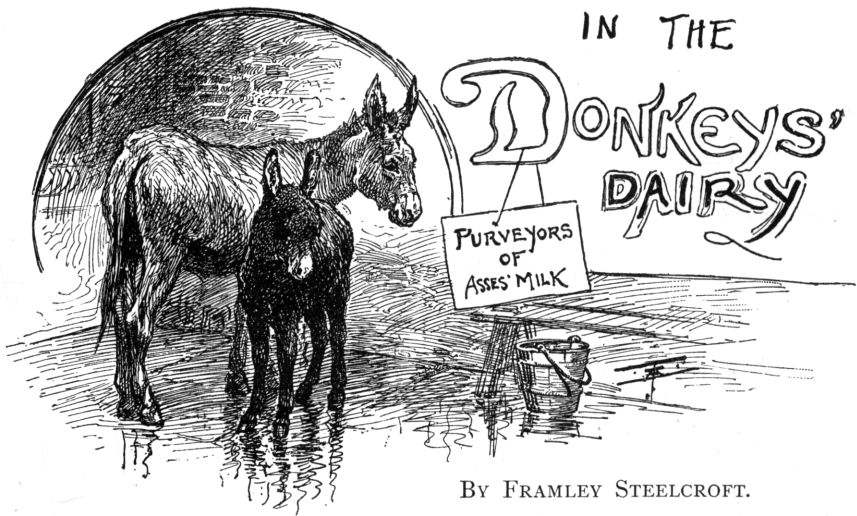
The earliest matches of which the scores have been preserved were those of Kent *v.* All England, in the Artillery Ground, Finsbury, 1743, and the Hambledon *v.* Kent, which took place at Bishopsbourne Paddock, Canterbury, August 17th, 1772. The latter portion of the eighteenth century was notable for the formation of the Marylebone Club, which took place in 1787, on the dissolution of the White Conduit Club, which had been in existence several years, and which played chiefly on the Islington fields, from which it took its name. The new club,

destined to become the controller of cricket, located itself in Dorset Square, Marylebone; subsequently it removed to North Bank, Regent's Park, and finally, in 1814, settled down in St. John's Wood Road, its present quarters. "Lord's," as the home of the M.C.C., has always been known as the best-appointed cricket-ground in the kingdom.

It would have been interesting to give some account of these early clubs and of their more notable members, did space permit. A few only of the hundreds of cricket celebrities have been mentioned. The annals of the game are full of their traits and exploits. Among the more famous men of the earlier half of the century mention may be made of Alfred Mynn (No. 16), the "demon bowler" of his day, of whom it is recorded that he actually took men's wickets before they knew where they were. He found a match, however, in Ward, the noted batsman, and in Fuller Pilch (No. 17), perhaps the most famous handler of the willow amongst the past generations of cricketers.



NO. 17.—FULLER PILCH.



BY FRAMLEY STEELCROFT.

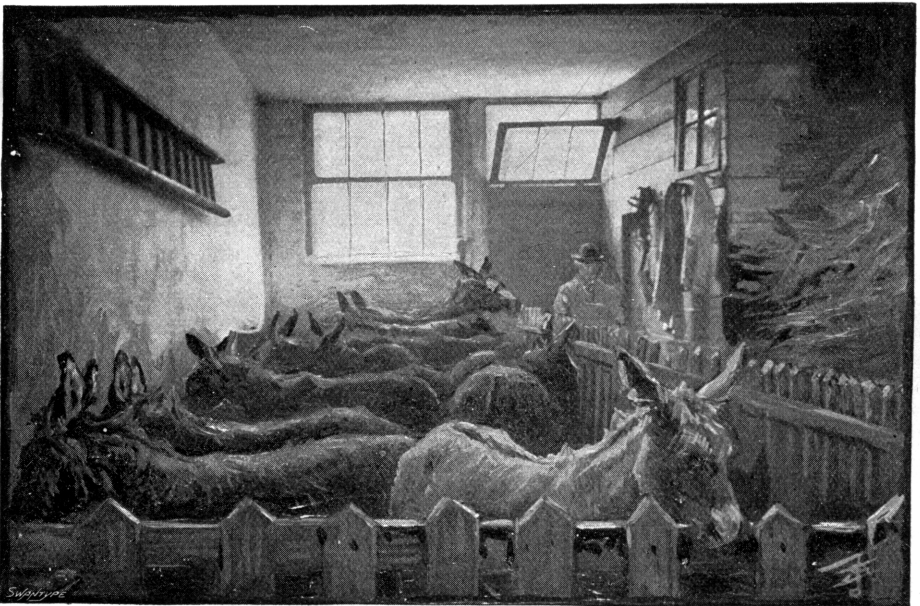


THAT the wealthy *malade imaginaire*, luxuriating in sunny Carthage, should order a sleek, well-groomed milch ass to be brought to his door every morning in order that he may drink of the thin, sweet fluid, is quite in accordance with the fitness of things; but we venture to doubt whether it is generally known that a fully-equipped donkeys' dairy is established within a few hundred yards of the Marble Arch, at Hyde Park.

Accompanied by an artist, we visited this extraordinary establishment, which, by the way, is nearly one hundred years old. On

entering from a mews at the back of the premises, one stands in a long stable, wherein are about twelve or fourteen asses of eminently respectable appearance. Really, they resemble Mr. Walter Rothschild's zebras rather than their own humble and long-suffering brethren on Hampstead Heath and elsewhere.

The visitor notes with interest that a certain sweet smell pervades the place, just as though it were a cows' dairy. A wooden railing, running the whole length, forms a kind of pen for the asses; and at one end of this pen is a sort of reserved inclosure for a few foals, or baby donkeys, whose presence is an absolute necessity to the milch asses.



THE INTERIOR OF THE STABLE.

The foregoing illustration shows the interior of the dairy itself. The donkeys, apparently for want of other employment, are jostling each other in an unobtrusively persistent sort of way, rendering it almost impossible for any one animal to have a minute's uninterrupted nibble at the sweet hay in the racks.

Every one of these placid, lovable animals has been fortuitously redeemed from a life of appalling drudgery, and, in the ordinary course of things, will revert thereto as soon as the yield of milk has ceased. The stoical philosophy of these animals is absolutely perfect. They trudge through the dreary desert of a donkey's life with utter indifference, regarding the vigorous thwack of their owner's bludgeon in the same light as the persistent annoyance of an errant fly—at least, to the outward seeming.

Then come the oases (no joke meant), and with them a fleeting period of idyllic repose; but you will notice no change in the donkeys' demeanour—no exulting joy at emancipation from dire slavery; just a meek acceptance of things, and what may be described as an apathetic readiness to resume the fearsome *status quo ante*, which has an appropriate termination on the banks of the asinine Styx.

Upon no other animal does maternity confer so great a boon as on the patient and

much-abused ass. The wretched animal may be a mere machine for giving carefully-measured rides to children, not to mention hilarious adult holiday-makers who certainly ought to know better; it may pass its days in semi-starvation, varied only by unmerciful and undeserved hidings administered at frequent intervals; but the moment it brings a little foal into the world, these things belong to the past, and the milch ass enters upon a glorious period of *otium cum dignitate*, since the life of a ducal baby may depend upon its daily yield.

Look at the "milkers, not workers," in the accompanying reproduction; then think of the lot of the common or beach donkey, and you cannot fail to understand the *pons asinorum*—to an evanescent Elysium. In fact, no pauper to whom fickle Fortune's wheel has brought untold wealth was ever so much courted as the erstwhile coster's moke. Now let us get to the practical side of this curious and interesting subject. The astute middleman in London will purchase milch asses in the remotest parts of the kingdom; it matters not whether the animals hail from the heights of Hampstead, the Welsh mountains, or the pastures of Kerry. All expenses are added to the price of the donkeys. The middleman, however, seldom pays more than thirty shillings for a milch



"MILKERS, NOT WORKERS,"

ass and foal (the two invariably go together) ; and he retails the pair for about thrice that sum to the proprietor of the London dairy.

It is a remarkable fact in connection with milch asses on hire, or bought altogether by wealthy invalids, that servants somehow acquire an idea that the milk is possessed of certain magical virtues ; consequently, natural repugnance is conquered by a supreme effort, and asses' milk swallowed by the pint below-stairs. Then, of course, the animals are sent back ; or complaints are received at the London depôt that the asses are unsatisfactory. One lady in London had four asses on hire, one after the other, and would probably never have known why the daily yield was so surprisingly meagre, were it not that she beheld her cook using asses' milk at tea, just as though it were ordinary cows' milk, only the allowance was far more liberal.

Talking of prejudice against asses' milk reminds us that a lady of title, living at Windsor, suffered a serious relapse when she discovered what "medicine" she had been taking. This lady was ordered to drink two pints of asses' milk per diem, but the nature of the fluid was carefully concealed from her. During her convalescent period, however, she chanced upon some screw-stoppered bottles, inclosed in wooden receptacles, the labels on which gave her a disagreeable surprise, which culminated in a feeling of utter loathing quite disproportionate to the occasion.

Our next illustration shows the donkey and its little one standing in the yard near

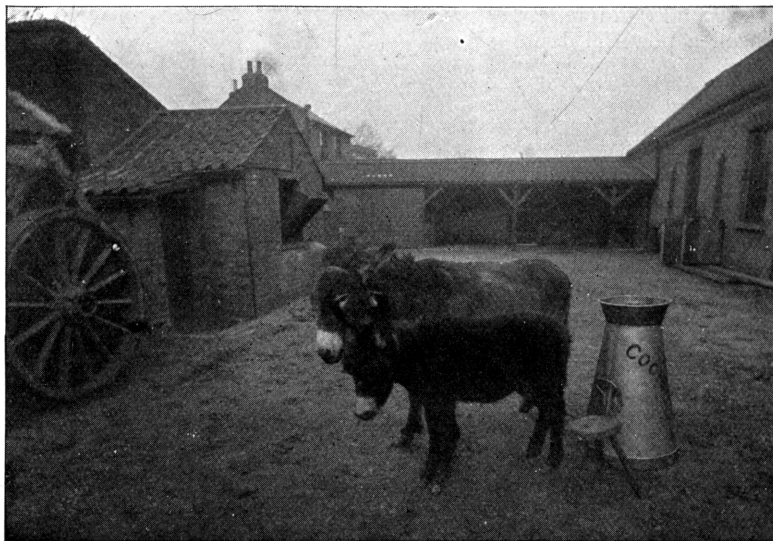
some outhouses. The milking-stool and churn have been placed in readiness.

Asses' milk is retailed at six shillings per quart. As one might expect, the trade is practically made by fashionable physicians and trained nurses, who recommend the milk in consumption cases, and for pulmonary complaints generally. Therefore, the winter season finds the donkeys' dairy exceedingly busy ; and wealthy invalids, who fly to the Riviera to escape the London fogs, actually pay ten guineas for a milch ass of their own, and take the animal with them—foal and all—so that from first to last the humble ass costs as much as a decent park hack.

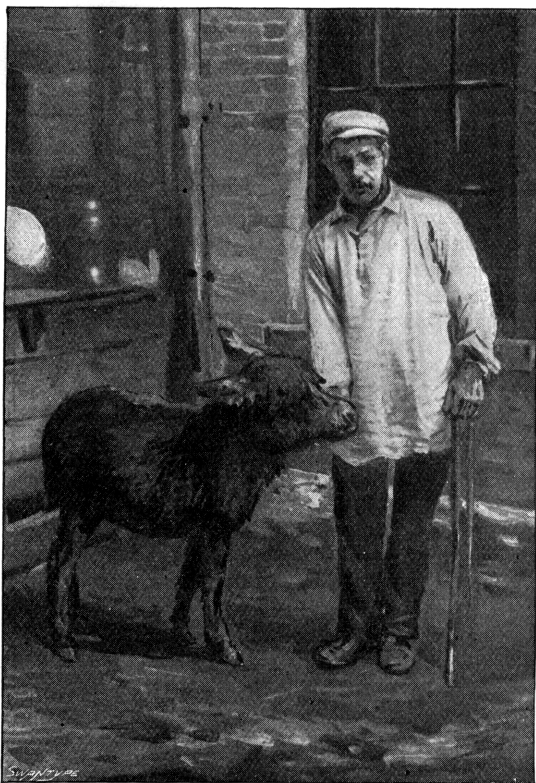
In the "babies' pen," a photograph was out of the question. Where two or three donkey-foals are gathered together, the spirit of sheer exuberance is surely rife among them. They jostled each other without apparent cause ; they indulged in spasmodic gyrations, and leaped into the air, giving their woolly little bodies a playful twist as they leaped ; and it was very evident the playful creatures possessed an inexhaustible amount of energy and vitality. We even took all the foals out of the pen save one, the smallest of all—a mischievous little wretch called Tim, who certainly was not two feet high.

But if we thought that Tim, deprived of the companionship of his fellows, would remain quite still, we were grievously mistaken. Having none of his kind to jostle, the aggravating little brute rolled upon his back with calm deliberation, and then swayed backwards and forwards with a slow, rhythmical motion that

was intensely exasperating. We finally took Tim into the court-yard of the dairy ; and after he had run round and round, with praiseworthy determination—for all the world as though he was training for a circus on his own account—he consented to stand with the chief drover—a serious man who went by the name of "Ginger," and whose chief delight was to christen his queer flock



WAITING FOR THE "MILKMAID."



"GINGER," AND THE BABY "TIM."

by such absurd names as "Peter the Great" and "Queen Anne"; other monarchs were also represented.

Anyway, we had a vast deal of trouble with "Ireland," and "Home Rule" was never still for five consecutive seconds. Moreover, the last-named ass evinced a powerful desire to join its comrades in the pen; and when our artist was on the point of uncovering the lens, the obstinate and dismal-looking brute would make yet another determined effort to get back into the stable. Unfortunately, although imposing names were conferred on the asses, the latter refused to acknowledge them; and in certain instances,

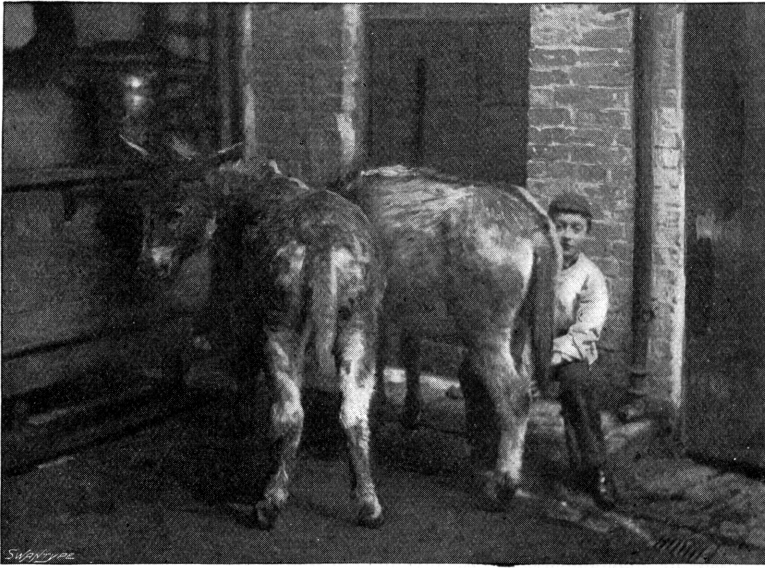
indeed, repudiated such appellations by violent demonstrations which caused the fiery "Ginger" to make use of epithets which we sincerely trust have never before been bestowed on the most long-suffering of donkeys.

At last, by dint of much shoving with brooms and the like handy implements—for the animals offered a quiet, but very obstinate, resistance—we got two asses into a corner of the dairy-yard, and then a white-smocked lad brought the stool and commenced to milk one of these, as is seen in our illustration. The asses, by the way, are milked four times a day, but during this period the yield is seldom more than a quart. Under favourable conditions the animals give milk for about eight months, so it is to the consumer's advantage to hire an ass at a guinea a week, and get all the milk obtainable. This plan is often adopted; but it is a noteworthy fact that the introduction of a milch ass into the *personnel* of an aristocratic family is but too often productive of deplorable dissension and heart-burning.

We will suppose that a certain peer, whose country house is in the north of England, hires or purchases outright a milch ass. A roomy horse-box and enough straw for a big stable are provided by the careful railway company for the valuable animal, upon whose milk a precious life may depend. This accommoda-



PHOTOGRAPHY UNDER DIFFICULTIES.



MILKING THE ASSES.

tion, however, has to be paid for pretty dearly in the long run. Then, of course, a man is sent with the ass; and it is this man's duty to hand the animal over to the custody of the purchaser's housekeeper, or some other responsible person.

Now, after all expenses have been paid—and these, you may be sure, are considerable—and the ass comfortably installed in a special outhouse, the fittings of which would cause a belated tramp to weep with envy, the momentous question arises: *Who is going to milk the animal?* You will ask: *Is this a momentous question?* We rather think it is. We have before us a letter from a certain noble earl, well known in society, who ruefully tells us that his servants were so horrified at the thought of milking a donkey, that they threatened to resign in a body if the dreadful request were persisted in.

The chief groom implored his noble master with tears in his eyes to be mindful of his six-and-

twenty years' service, and not to again ask him to milk the donkey. What would his fellow-servants say? Could he again look the housemaid in the face? No, no, the whole thing was horrible.

We should like it to be understood that this particular instance is perfectly true. Finally, his lordship simplified matters by actually milking the ass himself—though, being absolutely ignorant

of the operation, he went in fear of his life for many days. The noble earl still has both donkey and foal, the latter having been the children's playmate until it was quite grown up.

The illustration here given depicts the chief dairyman—who has occupied for over twenty years his dangerous position, as sundry bites and other marks upon his person testify—about to place in the wooden case a screw-topped glass bottle containing one pint of



SENDING OUT THE MILK.

asses' milk. The boy on the tricycle then delivers the precious fluid at various West-end mansions.

Astonishing as it may seem, a special train, costing more than £20, has been chartered for the conveyance of one quart of asses' milk, in charge of the chief dairyman. It was ordered by telegram, and was required for a dying child in Oxford. This brings us to the queer uses of asses' milk.

One well-known and fashionable man—a member of the late House of Commons—has one gill every morning, and his valet mixes the milk with patent blacking, in order to impart an exquisite gloss to his master's shoes. Again, a lady who took a furnished house in Mount Street paid two guineas a week for three years in order that a quart of asses' milk might be delivered daily. After this lady had gone to New York, her discharged maid informed the proprietors of the dairy that her late mistress found asses' milk "matchless for the hands and complexion." In a word, the lady used the milk in her bath.

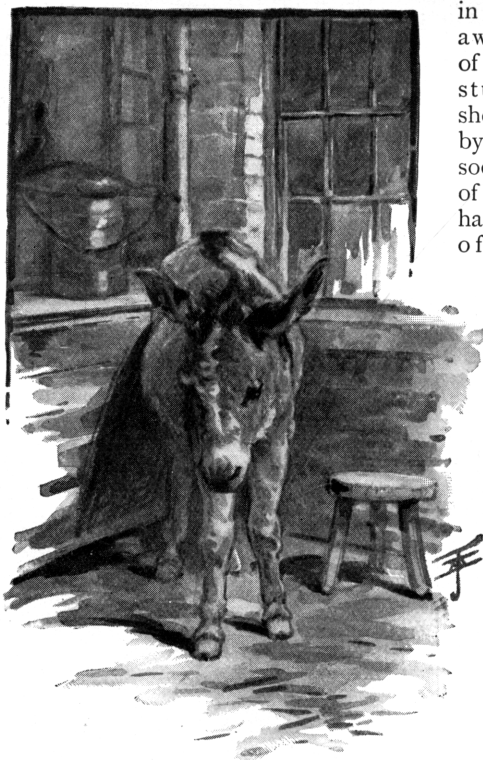
As a matter of fact, the vagaries of wealthy invalids and others who hire and buy milch asses are so extraordinary that we certainly should hesitate to believe them were it not that we have before us, as we write, piles of coroneted letters, coming from some of the most aristocratic addresses in Europe.

We select a long, rambling, but wholly charming letter from the Marchioness of —, who, having been informed that asses' milk is the nearest possible approach to human milk (which is perfectly true),

would be "awfully glad to know" whether the luckless donkey she had bought was to be "fed like an ordinary person." "The ass," wrote the noble marchioness, plaintively, "has steadfastly refused cooked meat and sweets, yet will eat with avidity a raw carrot." We should think so! We read farther on that the plebeian animal descended yet lower, and partook freely of "nice sweet hay"—for all the world like an ordinary donkey. Somehow, the whole species seems to be misunderstood; the milch ass is pampered and surfeited, while the common donkey is slowly murdered. No wonder that, if left to himself for a moment, the unfortunate animal seems to settle naturally into a position of utter dejection. The accompanying sketch, made by our artist in the yard of the dairy, illustrates this trait in a peculiarly happy manner.

Out of curiosity we made further inquiries about this particular ass. It had, we learned, originally belonged to a costermonger of Spitalfields. It was about to be sent away to a gentleman's country seat in

Devonshire, and would in all probability laze away the remainder of its days in flower-studded meadows, sheltered from the sun by giant trees, and soothed by the murmur of running water. The hardest task required of the animal was an occasional romp with high-born children—a labour of love, surely, after dragging monstrous loads of vegetables along the arid stretches of the Bethnal Green Road.



"IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?"

The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard.

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

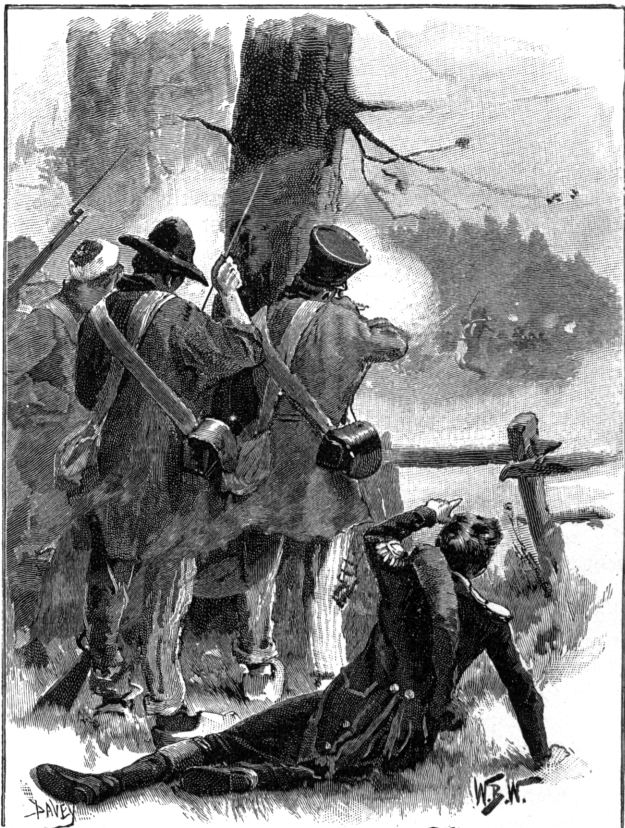
VI.—HOW THE BRIGADIER WAS TEMPTED BY THE DEVIL.

THE spring is at hand, my friends. I can see the little green spear-heads breaking out once more upon the chestnut trees, and the café tables have all been moved into the sunshine. It is more pleasant to sit there, and yet I do not wish to tell my little stories to the whole town. You have heard my doings as a lieutenant, as a squadron officer, as a colonel, as the chief of a brigade. But now I suddenly become something higher and more important. I become history.

If you have read of those closing years of the life of the Emperor which were spent in the Island of St. Helena, you will remember that, again and again, he implored permission to send out one single letter which should be unopened by those who held him. Many times he made this request, and even went so far as to promise that he would provide for his own wants and cease to be an expense to the British Government if it were granted to him. But his guardians knew that he was a terrible man, this pale, fat gentleman in the straw hat, and they dared not grant him what he asked. Many have wondered who it was to whom he could have had anything so secret to say. Some have supposed that it was to his wife, and some that it was to his father-in-law; some that it was to the Emperor Alexander, and some to Marshal Soult. What will you think of me, my friends, when I tell you it was to me—to me, the Brigadier Gerard—that the Emperor wished to write! Yes, humble as you see

me, with only my 100 francs a month of half-pay between me and hunger, it is none the less true that I was always in the Emperor's mind, and that he would have given his left hand for five minutes' talk with me. I will tell you to-night how this came about.

It was after the Battle of Fère-Champenoise, where the conscripts in their blouses and their sabots made such a fine stand, that we, the more long-headed of us, began to understand that it was all over with us. Our reserve ammunition had been taken in the battle, and we were left with silent guns and



“THE CONSCRIPTS MADE A FINE STAND.”

empty caissons. Our cavalry, too, was in a deplorable condition, and my own brigade had been destroyed in the great charge at Craonne. Then came the news that the enemy had taken Paris, that the citizens had mounted the white cockade; and finally, most terrible of all, that Marmont and his corps had gone over to the Bourbons. We looked at each other and asked how many more of our generals were going to turn against us. Already there were Jourdan, Marmont, Murat, Bernadotte, and Jomini—though nobody minded much about Jomini, for his pen was always sharper than his sword. We had been ready to fight Europe, but it looked now as though we were to fight Europe and half France as well.

We had come to Fontainebleau by a long, forced march, and there we were assembled, the poor remnants of us, the corps of Ney, the corps of my cousin Gerard, and the corps of Macdonald: twenty-five thousand in all, with seven thousand of the guard. But we had our prestige, which was worth fifty thousand, and our Emperor, who was worth fifty thousand more. He was always among us, serene, smiling, confident, taking his snuff and playing with his little riding-whip. Never in the days of his greatest victories have I admired him as much as I did during the Campaign of France.

One evening I was with a few of my officers drinking a glass of wine of Suresnes. I mention that it was wine of Suresnes just to show you that times were not very good with us. Suddenly I was disturbed by a message from Berthier that he wished to see me. When I speak of my old comrades-in-arms, I will, with your permission, leave out all the fine foreign titles which they had picked up during the wars. They are excellent for a Court, but you never heard them in the camp, for we could not afford to do away with our Ney, our Rapp, or our Soult—names which were as stirring to our ears as the blare of our trumpets blowing the reveille. It was Berthier, then, who sent to say that he wished to see me.

He had a suite of rooms at the end of the gallery of Francis the First, not very far from those of the Emperor. In the ante-chamber were waiting two men whom I knew well: Colonel Despienne, of the 57th of the line, and Captain Tremeau, of the Voltigeurs. They were both old soldiers—Tremeau had carried a musket in Egypt—and they were also both famous in the army for their courage and their skill with weapons. Tremeau had become a little stiff in the

wrist, but Despienne was capable at his best of making me exert myself. He was a tiny fellow, about three inches short of the proper height for a man—he was exactly three inches shorter than myself—but both with the sabre and with the small-sword he had several times almost held his own against me when we used to exhibit at Verron's Hall of Arms in the Palais Royal. You may think that it made us sniff something in the wind when we found three such men called together into one room. You cannot see the lettuce and the dressing without suspecting a salad.

"Name of a pipe!" said Tremeau, in his barrack-room fashion. "Are we then expecting three champions of the Bourbons?"

To all of us the idea appeared not improbable. Certainly in the whole army we were the very three who might have been chosen to meet them.

"The Prince of Neufchâteau desires to speak with the Brigadier Gerard," said a footman, appearing at the door.

In I went, leaving my two companions consumed with impatience behind me. It was a small room, but very gorgeously furnished. Berthier was seated opposite to me at a little table, with a pen in his hand and a note-book open before him. He was looking weary and slovenly—very different from that Berthier who used to give the fashion to the army, and who had so often set us poorer officers tearing our hair by trimming his pelisse with fur, one campaign, and with grey astrakhan the next. On his clean-shaven, comely face there was an expression of trouble, and he looked at me as I entered his chamber in a way which had in it something furtive and displeasing.

"Chief of Brigade Gerard!" said he.

"At your service, your Highness!" I answered.

"I must ask you, before I go farther, to promise me, upon your honour as a gentleman and a soldier, that what is about to pass between us shall never be mentioned to any third person."

My word, this was a fine beginning! I had no choice but to give the promise required.

"You must know, then, that it is all over with the Emperor," said he, looking down at the table and speaking very slowly, as if he had a hard task in getting out the words. "Jourdan at Rouen and Marmont at Paris have both mounted the white cockade, and it is rumoured that Talleyrand has talked Ney into doing the same. It is evident that

further resistance is useless, and that it can only bring misery upon our country. I wish to ask you, therefore, whether you are prepared to join me in laying hands upon the Emperor's person, and bringing the war to a conclusion by delivering him over to the allies."

I assure you that when I heard this infamous proposition put forward by the man who had been the earliest friend of the Emperor, and who had received greater favours from him than any of his followers, I could only stand and stare at him in amazement. For his part he tapped his pen-handle against his teeth, and looked at me with a slanting head.

"Well?" he asked.

"I am a little deaf upon one side," said I, coldly. "There are some things which I cannot hear. I beg that you will permit me to return to my duties."

"Nay, but you must not be headstrong," said he, rising up and laying his hand upon my shoulder. "You are aware that the Senate has declared against Napoleon, and that the Emperor Alexander refuses to treat with him."

"Sir," I cried, with passion, "I would have you know that I do not care the dregs of a wine-glass for the Senate or for the Emperor Alexander either."

"Then for what do you care?"

"For my own honour and for the service of my glorious master, the Emperor Napoleon."

"That is all very well," said Berthier, peevishly, shrugging his shoulders. "Facts are facts, and as men of the world, we must look them in the face. Are we to stand against the will of the nation? Are we to have civil war on the top of all our misfortunes? And, besides, we are thinning away. Every hour comes the news of fresh desertions. We have still time to make our peace, and, indeed, to earn the highest reward, by giving up the Emperor."

I shook so with passion that my sabre clattered against my thigh.

"Sir," I cried, "I never thought to have seen the day when a Marshal of France would have so far degraded himself as to put forward such a proposal. I leave you to your own conscience; but as for me, until I have the Emperor's own

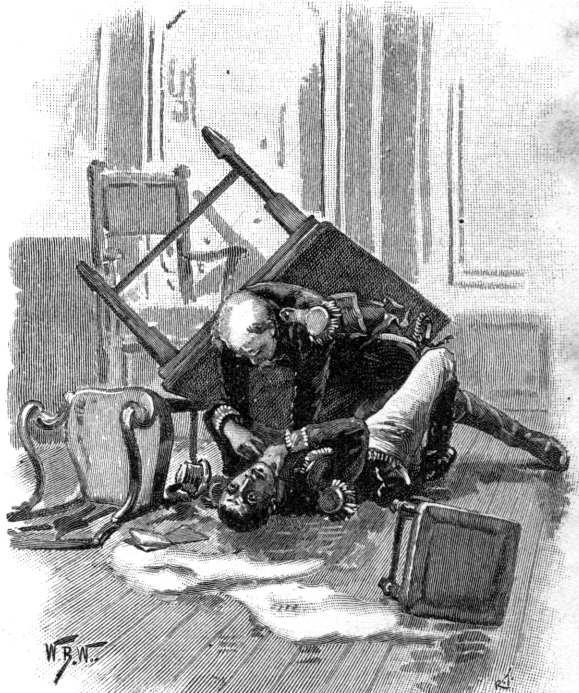
order, there shall always be the sword of Etienne Gerard between his enemies and himself."

I was so moved by my own words and by the fine position which I had taken up, that my voice broke, and I could hardly refrain from tears. I should have liked the whole army to have seen me as I stood with my head so proudly erect and my hand upon my heart proclaiming my devotion to the Emperor in his adversity. It was one of the supreme moments of my life.

"Very good," said Berthier, ringing a bell for the lackey. "You will show the Chief of Brigade Gerard into the salon."

The footman led me into an inner room, where he desired me to be seated. For my own part, my only desire was to get away, and I could not understand why they should wish to detain me. When one has had no change of uniform during a whole winter's campaign, one does not feel at home in a palace.

I had been there about a quarter of an hour when the footman opened the door again, and in came Colonel Despienne. Good heavens, what a sight he was! His



"TRETEAU AND BERTHIER WERE ROLLING TOGETHER UPON THE FLOOR."

face was as white as a guardsman's gaiters, his eyes projecting, the veins swollen upon his forehead, and every hair of his moustache bristling like those of an angry cat. He was too angry to speak, and could only shake his hands at the ceiling and make a gurgling in his throat. "Paricide! Viper!" those were the words that I could catch as he stamped up and down the room.

Of course it was evident to me that he had been subjected to the same infamous proposals as I had, and that he had received them in the same spirit. His lips were sealed to me, as mine were to him, by the promise which we had taken, but I contented myself with muttering "Atrocious! Unspeakable!"—so that he might know that I was in agreement with him.

Well, we were still there, he striding furiously up and down, and I seated in the corner, when suddenly a most extraordinary uproar broke out in the room which we had just quitted. There was a snarling, worrying growl, like that of a fierce dog which has got his grip. Then came a crash and a voice calling for help. In we rushed, the two of us, and, my faith, we were none too soon.

Old Tremeau and Berthier were rolling together upon the floor, with the table upon the top of them. The Captain had one of his great, skinny, yellow hands upon the Marshal's throat, and already his face was lead-coloured, and his eyes were starting from their sockets. As to Tremeau, he was beside himself, with foam upon the corners of his lips, and such a frantic expression upon him that I am convinced, had we not loosened his iron grip, finger by finger, that it would never have relaxed while the Marshal lived. His nails were white with the power of his grasp.

"I have been tempted by the devil!" he cried, as he staggered to his feet. "Yes, I have been tempted by the devil!"

As to Berthier, he could only lean against the wall, and pant for a couple of minutes, putting his hands up to his throat and rolling his head about. Then, with an angry gesture, he turned to the heavy blue curtain which hung behind his chair.

"There, sire!" he cried, furiously, "I told you exactly what would come of it."

The curtain was torn to one side and the Emperor stepped out into the room. We sprang to the salute, we three old soldiers, but it was all like a scene in a dream to us, and our eyes were as far out as Berthier's had been. Napoleon was dressed in his green-coated chasseur uniform, and he held his little silver-headed switch in his hand. He

looked at us each in turn, with a smile upon his face—that frightful smile in which neither eyes nor brow joined—and each in turn had, I believe, a pringling on his skin, for that was the effect which the Emperor's gaze had upon most of us. Then he walked across to Berthier and put his hand upon his shoulder.

"You must not quarrel with blows, my dear Prince," said he; "they are your title to nobility." He spoke in that soft, caressing manner which he could assume. There was no one who could make the French tongue sound so pretty as the Emperor, and no one who could make it more harsh and terrible.

"I believe he would have killed me," cried Berthier, still rolling his head about.

"Tut, tut! I should have come to your help had these officers not heard your cries. But I trust that you are not really hurt!" He spoke with earnestness, for he was in truth very fond of Berthier—more so than of any man, unless it were of poor Duroc.

Berthier laughed, though not with a very good grace.

"It is new for me to receive my injuries from French hands," said he.

"And yet it was in the cause of France," returned the Emperor. Then, turning to us, he took old Tremeau by the ear. "Ah, old grumbler," said he, "you were one of my Egyptian grenadiers, were you not, and had your musket of honour at Marengo. I remember you very well, my good friend. So the old fires are not yet extinguished! They still burn up when you think that your Emperor is wronged. And you, Colonel Despienne, you would not even listen to the tempter. And you, Gerard, your faithful sword is ever to be between me and my enemies. Well, well, I have had some traitors about me, but now at last we are beginning to see who are the true men."

You can fancy, my friends, the thrill of joy which it gave us when the greatest man in the whole world spoke to us in this fashion. Tremeau shook until I thought he would have fallen, and the tears ran down his gigantic moustache. If you had not seen it, you could never believe the influence which the Emperor had upon those coarse-grained, savage old veterans.

"Well, my faithful friends," said he, "if you will follow me into this room, I will explain to you the meaning of this little farce which we have been acting. I beg, Berthier, that you will remain in this chamber, and so make sure that no one interrupts us."

It was new for us to be doing business, with a Marshal of France as sentry at the door. However, we followed the Emperor as we were ordered, and he led us into the recess of the window, gathering us around him and sinking his voice as he addressed us.

"I have picked you out of the whole army," said he, "as being not only the most formidable but also, the most faithful of my soldiers. I was convinced that you were all three men who would never waver in your fidelity to me. If I have ventured to put that fidelity to the proof, and to watch you whilst attempts were at my orders made upon your honour, it was only because, in the days when I have found the blackest treason amongst my own flesh and blood, it is necessary that I should be doubly circumspect. Suffice it that I am well convinced now that I can rely upon your valour."

"To the death, sire!" cried Tremeau, and we both repeated it after him.

Napoleon drew us all yet a little closer to him, and sank his voice still lower.

"What I say to you now I have said to no one—not to my wife or my brothers; only to you. It is all up with us, my friends. We have come to our last rally. The game is finished, and we must make provision accordingly."

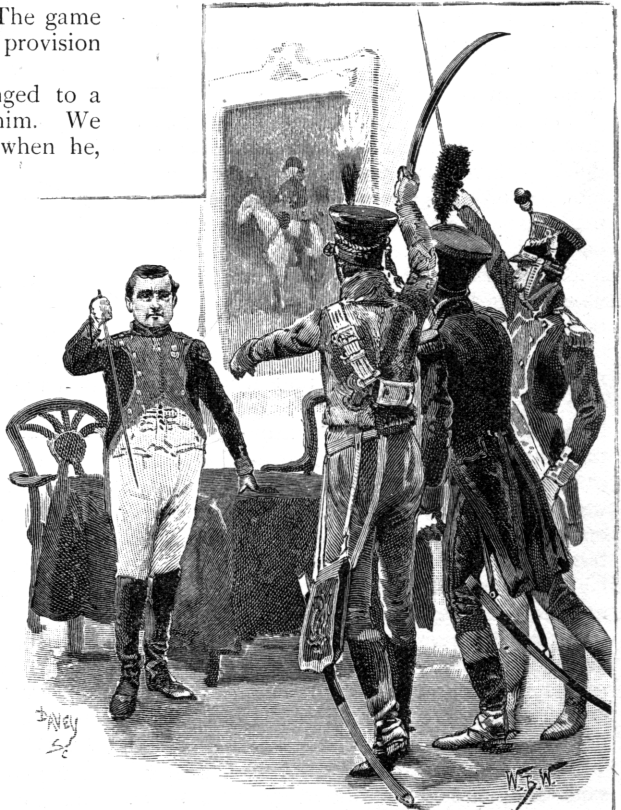
My heart seemed to have changed to a nine-pounder ball as I listened to him. We had hoped against hope, but now when he, the man who was always serene and who always had reserves—when he, in that quiet, impassive voice of his, said that everything was over, we realized that the clouds had shut for ever, and the last gleam gone. Tremeau snarled and gripped at his sabre, Despienne ground his teeth, and for my own part I threw out my chest and clicked my heels to show the Emperor that there were some spirits which could rise to adversity.

"My papers and my fortune must be secured," whispered the Emperor. "The whole course of the future may depend upon my having them safe. They are our base for the next attempt—for I am very sure that these poor Bourbons would find that my footstool is too large to make a throne for them. Where am I to keep these precious things? My belongings will be searched

—so will the houses of my supporters. They must be secured and concealed by men whom I can trust with that which is more precious to me than my life. Out of the whole of France, you are those whom I have chosen for this sacred trust.

"In the first place, I will tell you what these papers are. You shall not say that I have made you blind agents in the matter. They are the official proof of my divorce from Josephine, of my legal marriage to Marie Louise, and of the birth of my son and heir, the King of Rome. If we cannot prove each of these, the future claim of my family to the throne of France falls to the ground. Then there are securities to the value of forty millions of francs—an immense sum, my friends, but of no more value than this riding switch when compared to the other papers of which I have spoken. I tell you these things that you may realize the enormous importance of the task which I am committing to your care. Listen, now, while I inform you where you are to get these papers, and what you are to do with them.

"They were handed over to my trusty



"TO THE DEATH, SIRE."

friend, the Countess Walewski, at Paris, this morning. At five o'clock she starts for Fontainebleau in her blue berline. She should reach here between half-past nine and ten. The papers will be concealed in the berline, in a hiding-place which none know but herself. She has been warned that her carriage will be stopped outside the town by three mounted officers, and she will hand the packet over to your care. You are the younger man, Gerard, but you are of the senior grade. I confide to your care this amethyst ring, which you will show the lady as a token of your mission, and which you will leave with her as a receipt for her papers.

"Having received the packet, you will ride with it into the forest as far as the ruined dove-house—the Colombier. It is possible that I may meet you there—but if it seems to me to be dangerous, I will send my body-servant, Mustapha, whose directions you may take as being mine. There is no roof to the Colombier, and to-night will be a full moon. At the right of the entrance you will find three spades leaning against the wall. With these you will dig a hole three feet deep in the north-eastern corner—that is, in the corner to the left of the door, and nearest to Fontainebleau. Having buried the papers, you will replace the soil with great care, and you will then report to me at the palace."

These were the Emperor's directions, but given with an accuracy and minuteness of detail such as no one but himself could put into an order. When he had finished, he made us swear to keep his secret as long as he lived, and as long as the papers should remain buried. Again and again he made us swear it before he dismissed us from his presence.

Colonel Despienne had quarters at the "Sign of the Pheasant," and it was there that we supped together. We were all three men who had been trained to take the strangest turns of fortune as part of our daily life and business, yet we were all flushed and moved by the extraordinary interview which we had had, and by the thought of the great adventure which lay before us. For my own part, it had been my fate three several times to take my orders from the lips of the Emperor himself, but neither the incident of the Ajaccio murderers nor the famous ride which I made to Paris appeared to offer such opportunities as this new and most intimate commission.

"If things go right with the Emperor," said Despienne, "we shall all live to be marshals yet."

We drank with him to our future cocked hats and our bâtons.

It was agreed between us that we should make our way separately to our rendezvous, which was to be the first milestone upon the Paris road. In this way we should avoid the gossip which might get about if three men who were so well known were to be seen riding out together. My little Violette had cast a shoe that morning, and the farrier was at work upon her when I returned, so that my comrades were already there when I arrived at the trysting-place. I had taken with me not only my sabre, but also my new pair of English rifled pistols, with a mallet for knocking in the charges. They had cost me a hundred and fifty francs at Trouvel's, in the Rue de Rivoli, but they would carry far further and straighter than the others. It was with one of them that I had saved old Bouvet's life at Leipzig.

The night was cloudless, and there was a brilliant moon behind us, so that we always had three black horsemen riding down the white road in front of us. The country is so thickly wooded, however, that we could not see very far. The great palace clock had already struck ten, but there was no sign of the Countess. We began to fear that something might have prevented her from starting.

And then suddenly we heard her in the distance. Very faint at first were the birr of wheels and the tat-tat-tat of the horses' feet. Then they grew louder and clearer and louder yet, until a pair of yellow lanterns swung round the curve, and in their light we saw the two big brown horses tearing along with the high, blue carriage at the back of them. The postilion pulled them up panting and foaming within a few yards of us. In a moment we were at the window and had raised our hands in a salute to the beautiful pale face which looked out at us.

"We are the three officers of the Emperor, madame," said I, in a low voice, leaning my face down to the open window. "You have already been warned that we should wait upon you."

The countess had a very beautiful, cream-tinted complexion of a sort which I particularly admire, but she grew whiter and whiter as she looked up at me. Harsh lines deepened upon her face until she seemed, even as I looked at her, to turn from youth into age.

"It is evident to me," she said, "that you are three impostors."

If she had struck me across the face with



"WE RAISED OUR HANDS IN A SALUTE."

her delicate hand she could not have startled me more. It was not her words only, but the bitterness with which she hissed them out.

"Indeed, madame," said I. "You do us less than justice. These are the Colonel Despienne and Captain Tremeau. For myself, my name is Brigadier Gerard, and I have only to mention it to assure anyone who has heard of me that——"

"Oh, you villains!" she interrupted. "You think that because I am only a woman I am very easily to be hoodwinked! You miserable impostors!"

I looked at Despienne, who had turned white with anger, and at Tremeau, who was tugging at his moustache.

"Madame," said I, coldly, "when the Emperor did us the honour to intrust us with this mission, he gave me this amethyst ring as a token. I had not thought that three honourable gentlemen would have needed such corroboration, but I can only confute your unworthy suspicions by placing it in your hands."

She held it up in the light of the carriage lamp, and the most dreadful expression of grief and of horror contorted her face.

"It is his!" she screamed, and then, "Oh, my God, what have I done? What have I done?"

I felt that something terrible had befallen. "Quick, madame, quick!" I cried. "Give us the papers!"

"I have already given them."

"Given them! To whom?"

"To three officers."

"When?"

"Within the half-hour."

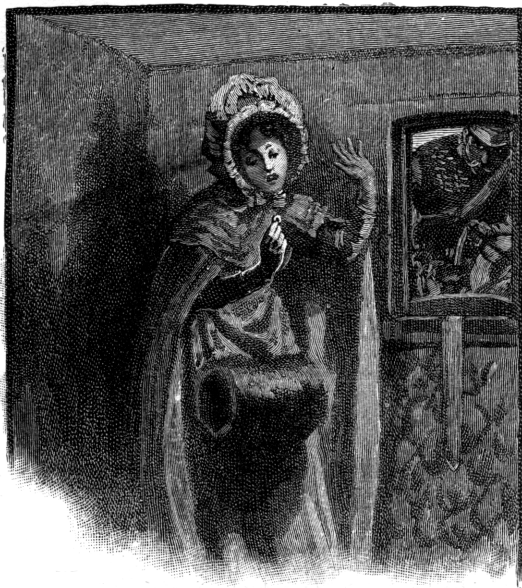
"Where are they?"

"God help me, I do not know. They stopped the berline, and I handed them over to them without hesitation, thinking that they had come from the Emperor."

It was a thunder-clap. But those are the moments when I am at my finest.

"You remain here," said I, to my comrades. "If three horsemen pass you, stop them at any hazard. The lady will describe them to you. I will be with you presently." One shake of the bridle, and I was flying into Fontainebleau as only Violette could have carried me. At the palace I flung myself off, rushed up the stairs, brushed aside the lackeys who would have stopped me, and pushed my way into the Emperor's own cabinet. He and Macdonald were busy with pencil and compasses over a chart. He looked up with an angry frown at my sudden entry, but his face changed colour when he saw that it was I.

"You can leave us, Marshal," said he,



"IT IS HIS!" SHE SCREAMED.

and then, the instant that the door was closed :
"What news about the papers?"

"They are gone," said I, and in a few curt words I told him what had happened. His face was calm, but I saw the compasses quiver in his hand.

"You must recover them, Gerard!" he cried. "The destinies of my dynasty are at stake. Not a moment is to be lost! To horse, sir, to horse!"

"Who are they, sire?"

"I cannot tell. I am surrounded with treason. But they will take them to Paris. To whom should they carry them but to the villain Talleyrand? Yes, yes, they are on the Paris road, and may yet be overtaken. With the three best mounts in my stables and——"

I did not wait to hear the end of the sentence. I was already clattering down the stair. I am sure that five minutes had not passed before I was galloping Violette out of the town with the bridle of one of the Emperor's own Arab chargers in either hand. They wished me to take three, but I should have never dared to look my Violette in the face again. I feel that the spectacle must have been superb when I dashed up to my comrades and pulled the horses on to their haunches in the moonlight.

"No one has passed?"

"No one."

"Then they are on the Paris road. Quick! Up and after them!"

They did not take long, those good

soldiers. In a flash they were upon the Emperor's horses, and their own left masterless by the roadside. Then away we went upon our long chase, I in the centre, Despienne upon my right, and Tremeau a little behind, for he was the heavier man. Heavens, how we galloped! The twelve flying hoofs roared and roared along the hard, smooth road. Poplars and moon, black bars and silver streaks, for mile after mile our course lay along the same chequered track, with our shadows in front and our dust behind. We could hear the rasping of bolts and the creaking of shutters from the cottages as we thundered past them, but we were only three dark blurs upon the road by the time that the folk could look after us. It was just striking midnight as we raced into Corbail; but an ostler with a bucket in either hand was throwing his black shadow across the golden fan which was cast from the open door of the inn.

"Three riders!" I gasped. "Have they passed?"

"I have just been watering their horses," said he. "I should think they——"

"On, on, my friends!" and away we flew, striking fire from the cobblestones of the little town. A gendarme tried to stop us, but his voice was drowned by our rattle and clatter. The houses slid past, and we were out on the country road again, with a clear twenty miles between ourselves and Paris. How could they escape us, with the finest horses in France behind them? Not one of the three had turned a hair, but Violette was always a head and shoulders to the front. She was going within herself, too, and I knew by the spring of her that I had only to let her stretch herself, and the Emperor's horses would see the colour of her tail.

"There they are!" cried Despienne.

"We have them!" growled Tremeau.

"On, comrades, on!" I shouted, once more.

A long stretch of white road lay before us in the moonlight. Far away down it we could see three cavaliers, lying low upon their horses' necks. Every instant they grew larger and clearer as we gained upon them. I could see quite plainly that the two upon either side were wrapped in mantles and rode upon chestnut horses, whilst the man between them was dressed in a chasseur uniform and mounted upon a grey. They were keeping abreast, but it was easy enough to see from the way in which he gathered his legs for each spring that the centre horse was far the

fresher of the three. And the rider appeared to be the leader of the party, for we continually saw the glint of his face in the moonshine as he looked back to measure the distance between us. At first it was only a glimmer, then it was cut across with a moustache, and at last when we began to feel their dust in our throats I could give a name to my man.

"Halt, Colonel de Montluc!" I shouted. "Halt, in the Emperor's name!"

I had known him for years as a daring officer and an unprincipled rascal. Indeed, there was a score between us, for he had shot my friend, Treville, at Warsaw, pulling his trigger, as some said, a good second before the drop of the handkerchief.

Well, the words were hardly out of my mouth when his two comrades wheeled round and fired their pistols at us. I heard Despienne give a terrible cry, and at the same instant both Tremeau and I let drive at the same man. He fell forward with his hands swinging on each side of his horse's neck. His comrade spurred on to Tremeau, sabre in hand, and I heard the crash which comes when a strong cut is met by a stronger parry. For my own part I never turned my head, but I touched Violette with the spur for the first time and flew after the leader. That he should leave his comrades and fly was proof enough that I should leave mine and follow.

He had gained a couple of hundred paces, but the good little mare set that right before we could have passed two milestones. It was in vain that he spurred and thrashed like a gunner driver on a soft road. His hat flew off with his exertions, and his bald head gleamed in the moonshine. But do what he might, he still heard the rattle of the hoofs growing louder and louder behind him. I could not have been twenty yards from him, and the shadow head was touching the shadow haunch, when he turned with a curse in his saddle and emptied both his pistols, one after the other, into Violette.

I have been wounded myself so often that I have to stop and think before I can tell you the exact number of times. I have been hit by musket balls, by pistol bullets, and by bursting shell, besides being pierced by bayonet, lance, sabre, and finally by a bradawl,

which was the most painful of any. Yet out of all these injuries I have never known the same deadly sickness as came over me when I felt the poor, silent, patient creature, which I had come to love more than anything in the world except my mother and the Emperor, reel and stagger beneath me. I pulled my second pistol from my holster and fired point-blank between the fellow's broad shoulders. He slashed his horse across the flank with his whip, and for a moment I thought that I had missed him. But then on the green of his chasseur jacket I saw an ever-widening black smudge, and he began to sway in his saddle, very slightly at first, but more and more with every bound, until at last over he



"OVER HE WENT, WITH HIS FOOT CAUGHT IN THE STIRRUP."

went, with his foot caught in the stirrup and his shoulders thud-thud-thudding along the road, until the drag was too much for the tired horse, and I closed my hand upon the foam-spattered bridle-chain. As I pulled him up it eased the stirrup leather, and the spurred heel clinked loudly as it fell.

"Your papers!" I cried, springing from my saddle. "This instant!"

But even as I said it, the huddle of the green body and the fantastic sprawl of the limbs in the moonlight told me clearly enough that it was all over with him. My bullet had passed through his heart, and it was only his own iron will which had held him so long in the saddle. He had lived hard, this Montluc, and I will do him justice to say that he died hard also.

But it was the papers—always the papers—of which I thought. I opened his tunic and I felt in his shirt. Then I searched his holsters and his *sabre-tasche*. Finally I dragged off his boots, and undid his horse's girth so as to hunt under the saddle. There was not a nook or crevice which I did not ransack. It was useless. They were not upon him.

When this stunning blow came upon me I could have sat down by the roadside and wept. Fate seemed to be fighting against me, and that is an enemy from whom even a gallant hussar might not be ashamed to flinch. I stood with my arm over the neck of my poor wounded *Violette*, and I tried to think it all out, that I might act in the wisest way. I was aware that the Emperor had no great respect for my wits, and I longed to show him that he had done me an injustice. Montluc had not the papers. And yet Montluc had sacrificed his companions in order to make his escape. I could make nothing of that. On the other hand, it was clear that, if he had not got them, one or other of his comrades had. One of them was certainly dead. The other I had left fighting with *Tremeau*, and if he escaped from the old swordsman he had still to pass me. Clearly, my work lay behind me.

I hammered fresh charges into my pistols after I had turned this over in my head. Then I put

them back in the holsters, and I examined my little mare, she jerking her head and cocking her ears the while, as if to tell me that an old soldier like herself did not make a fuss about a scratch or two. The first shot had merely grazed her off shoulder, leaving a skin-mark, as if she had brushed a wall. The second was more serious. It had passed through the muscle of her neck, but already it had ceased to bleed. I reflected that if she weakened I could mount Montluc's grey, and meanwhile I led him along beside us, for he was a fine horse, worth fifteen hundred francs at the least, and it seemed to me that no one had a better right to him than I.

Well, I was all impatience now to get back to the others, and I had just given *Violette* her head, when suddenly I saw something glimmering in a field by the roadside. It was the brasswork upon the *chasseur* hat which had flown from Montluc's head; and at the sight of it a thought made me jump in the saddle. How could the hat have flown off? With its weight, would it not have simply dropped? And here it lay, fifteen paces from the roadway! Of course, he must have thrown it off when he had made sure that I would overtake him. And if he threw it off—I did not stop to reason any more, but sprang from the mare with my heart beating the *pas-de-charge*. Yes, it was all right this time. There, in the crown of the hat was stuffed a roll of papers in a parchment wrapper bound round with yellow



"I PULLED IT OUT."

ribbon. I pulled it out with the one hand, and holding the hat in the other, I danced for joy in the moonlight. The Emperor would see that he had not made a mistake when he put his affairs into the charge of Etienne Gerard.

I had a safe pocket on the inside of my tunic just over my heart, where I kept a few little things which were dear to me, and into this I thrust my precious roll. Then I sprang upon Violette, and was pushing forward to see what had become of Tremeau, when I saw a horseman riding across the field in the distance. At the same instant I heard the sound of hoofs approaching me, and there in the moonlight was the Emperor upon his white charger, dressed in his grey overcoat and his three-cornered hat, just as I had seen him so often upon the field of battle.

"Well!" he cried, in the sharp, sergeant-major way of his. "Where are my papers?"

I spurred forward and presented them without a word. He broke the ribbon and ran his eyes rapidly over them. Then, as we sat our horses head to tail, he threw his left arm across me with his hand upon my shoulder. Yes, my friends, simple as you see me, I have been embraced by my great master.

"Gerard," he cried, "you are a marvel!"

I did not wish to contradict him, and it brought a flush of joy upon my cheeks to know that he had done me justice at last.

"Where is the thief, Gerard?" he asked.

"Dead, sire."

"You killed him?"

"He wounded my horse, sire, and would have escaped had I not shot him."

"Did you recognise him?"

"De Montluc is his name, sire—a Colonel of Chasseurs."

"Tut," said the Emperor. "We have got the poor pawn, but the hand which plays the game is still out of our reach." He sat in silent thought for a little, with his chin sunk upon his chest. "Ah, Talleyrand, Talleyrand," I heard him mutter. "If I had been in your place and you in mine, you would have crushed a viper when you held it under your heel. For five years, I have known you for what you are, and yet I have let you live to sting me. Never mind, my brave," he continued, turning to me, "there will come a day of reckoning for everybody, and when it arrives, I promise you that my friends will be remembered as well as my enemies."

"Sire," said I, for I had had time for

thought as well as he, "if your plans about these papers have been carried to the ears of your enemies, I trust that you do not think that it was owing to any indiscretion upon the part of myself or of my comrades."

"It would be hardly reasonable for me to do so," he answered, "seeing that this plot was hatched in Paris, and that you only had your orders a few hours ago."

"Then how——?"

"Enough," he cried, sternly. "You take an undue advantage of your position."

That was always the way with the Emperor. He would chat with you as with a friend and a brother, and then when he had wiled you into forgetting the gulf which lay between you, he would suddenly, with a word or with a look, remind you that it was as impassable as ever. When I have fondled my old hound until he has been encouraged to paw my knees, and I have then thrust him down again, it has made me think of the Emperor and his ways.

He reined his horse round, and I followed him in silence and with a heavy heart. But when he spoke again his words were enough to drive all thought of myself out of my mind.

"I could not sleep until I knew how you had fared," said he. "I have paid a price for my papers. There are not so many of my old soldiers left that I can afford to lose two in one night."

When he said "two" it turned me cold.

"Colonel Despienne was shot, sire," I stammered.

"And Captain Tremeau cut down. Had I been a few minutes earlier I might have saved him. The other escaped across the fields."

I remembered that I had seen a horseman a moment before I had met the Emperor. He had taken to the fields to avoid me, but if I had known, and Violette been unwounded, the old soldier would not have gone unavenged. I was thinking sadly of his sword-play, and wondering whether it was his stiffening wrist which had been fatal to him, when Napoleon spoke again.

"Yes, Brigadier," said he, "you are now the only man who will know where these papers are concealed."

It must have been imagination, my friends, but for an instant I may confess that it seemed to me that there was a tone in the Emperor's voice which was not altogether one of sorrow. But the dark thought had hardly time to form itself in my mind before he let me see that I was doing him an injustice.

"Yes, I have paid a price for my papers," he said, and I heard them crackle as he put his hand up to his bosom. "No man has ever had more faithful servants—no man since the beginning of the world."

As he spoke we came upon the scene of the struggle. Colonel Despienne and the man whom we had shot lay together some distance down the road, while their horses grazed contentedly beneath the poplars. Captain Tremereau lay in front of us upon his back, with his arms and legs stretched out, and his sabre broken short off in his hand. His tunic was open, and a huge blood-clot hung like a dark handkerchief out of a slit in his white shirt. I could see the gleam of his clenched teeth from under his immense moustache.

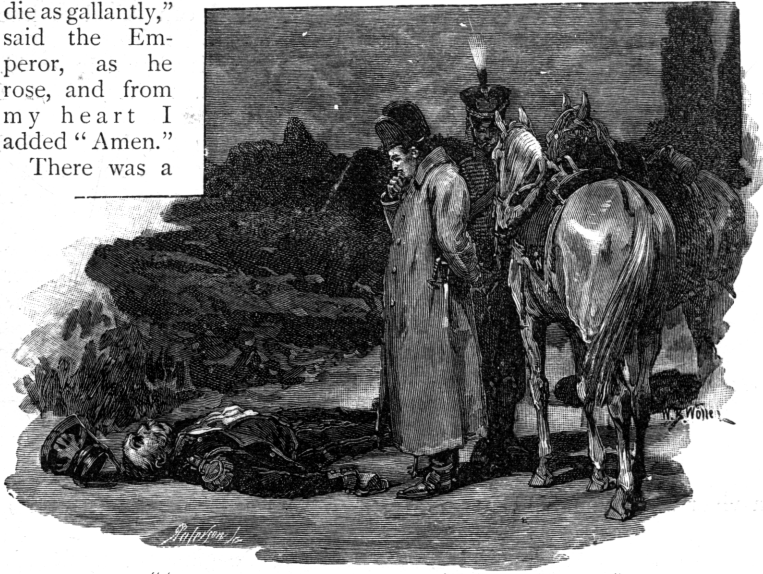
The Emperor sprang from his horse and bent down over the dead man.

"He was with me since Rivoli," said he, sadly. "He was one of my old grumblers in Egypt."

And the voice brought the man back from the dead. I saw his eyelids shiver. He twitched his arm, and moved the sword-hilt a few inches. He was trying to raise it in a salute. Then the mouth opened, and the hilt tinkled down on to the ground.

"May we all die as gallantly," said the Emperor, as he rose, and from my heart I added "Amen."

There was a



" 'MAY WE ALL DIE AS GALLANTLY,' SAID THE EMPEROR."

farm within fifty yards of where we were standing, and the farmer, roused from his sleep by the clatter of hoofs and the cracking of pistols, had rushed out to the roadside. We saw him now, dumb with fear and aston-

ishment, staring open-eyed at the Emperor. It was to him that we committed the care of the four dead men and of the horses also. For my own part, I thought it best to leave Violette with him and to take De Montluc's grey with me, for he could not refuse to give me back my own mare, whilst there might be difficulties about the other. Besides, my little friend's wound had to be considered, and we had a long return ride before us.

The Emperor did not at first talk much upon the way. Perhaps the deaths of Despienne and Tremereau still weighed heavily upon his spirits. He was always a reserved man, and in those times, when every hour brought him the news of some success of his enemies or defection of his friends, one could not expect him to be a merry companion. Nevertheless, when I reflected that he was carrying in his bosom those papers which he valued so highly, and which only a few hours ago appeared to be for ever lost, and when I further thought that it was I, Etienne Gerard, who had placed them there, I felt that I had deserved some little consideration. The same idea may have occurred to him, for when we had at last left the Paris high road, and had entered the forest, he began of his

own accord to tell me that which I should have most liked to have asked him.

"As to the papers," said he, "I have already told you that there is no one now, except you and me, who knows where they are to be concealed. My Mameluke carried the spades to the pigeon-house, but I have told him nothing. Our plans, however, for bringing the packet from Paris have been formed since Monday. There were three in the secret, a woman and two

men. The woman I would trust with my life; which of the two men has betrayed us I do not know, but I think that I may promise to find out."

We were riding in the shadow of the trees

at the time, and I could hear him slapping his riding-whip against his boot, and taking pinch after pinch of snuff, as was his way when he was excited.

"You wonder, no doubt," said he, after a pause, "why these rascals did not stop the carriage at Paris instead of at the entrance to Fontainebleau."

In truth, the objection had not occurred to me, but I did not wish to appear to have less wits than he gave me credit for, so I answered that it was indeed surprising.

"Had they done so they would have made a public scandal, and run a chance of missing their end. Short of taking the berline to pieces, they could not have discovered the hiding-place. He planned it well—he could always plan well—and he chose his agents well also. But mine were the better."

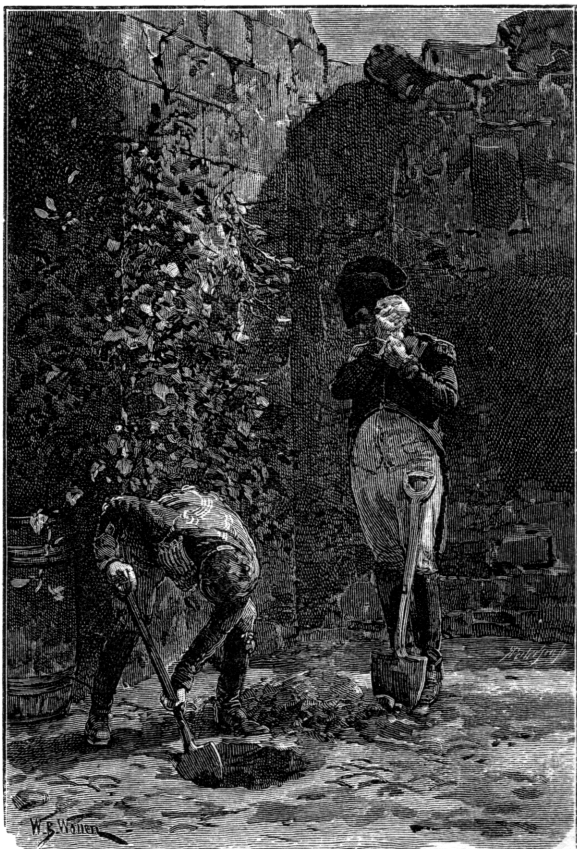
It is not for me to repeat to you, my friends, all that was said to me by the Emperor as we walked our horses amid the black shadows and through the moon-silvered glades of the great forest. Every word of it is impressed upon my memory, and before I pass away it is likely that I will place it all upon paper, so that others may read it in the days to come. He spoke freely of his past, and something also of his future; of the devotion of Macdonald, of the treason of Marmont, of the little King of Rome, concerning whom he talked with as much tenderness as any bourgeois father of a single child; and, finally, of his father-in-law, the Emperor of Austria, who would, he thought, stand between his enemies and himself. For myself, I dared not say a word, remembering how I had already brought a rebuke upon myself; but I rode by his side, hardly able to believe that this was indeed the great Emperor, the man whose glance sent a thrill through me, who was now pouring out his thoughts to me in short, eager sentences, the words rattling and racing like the hoofs of a galloping squadron. It is possible that, after the word-splittings and diplomacy of a Court, it was a relief to him to speak his mind to a plain soldier like myself.

In this way the Emperor and I—even after years it sends a flush of pride into my cheeks to be able to put those words together —

the Emperor and I walked our horses through the Forest of Fontainebleau, until we came at last to the Colombier. The three spades were propped against the wall upon the right-hand side of the ruined door, and at the sight of them the tears sprang to my eyes as I thought of the hands for which they were intended. The Emperor seized one and I another.

"Quick!" said he. "The dawn will be upon us before we get back to the palace."

We dug the hole, and placing the papers in one of my pistol holsters to screen them from the damp, we laid them at the bottom and covered them up. We then carefully removed all marks of the ground having been disturbed, and we placed a large stone upon the top. I dare say that since the Emperor was a young gunner, and helped to train his pieces against Toulon, he had not worked so hard with his hands. He was mopping his forehead with his silk handkerchief long before we had come to the end of our task.



"HE WAS MOPPING HIS FOREHEAD WITH HIS SILK HANDKERCHIEF."

The first grey cold light of morning was stealing through the tree trunks when we came out together from the old pigeon-house. The Emperor laid his hand upon my shoulder as I stood ready to help him to mount.

"We have left the papers there," said he, solemnly, "and I desire that you shall leave all thought of them there also. Let the recollection of them pass entirely from your mind, to be revived only when you receive a direct order under my own hand and seal. From this time onwards you forget all that has passed."

"I forget it, sire," said I.

We rode together to the edge of the town, where he desired that I should separate from him. I had saluted, and was turning my horse, when he called me back.

"It is easy to mistake the points of the compass in the forest," said he. "Would you not say that it was in the north-eastern corner that we buried them?"

"Buried what, sire?"

"The papers, of course," he cried, impatiently.

"What papers, sire?"

"Name of a name! Why, the papers that you have recovered for me."

"I am really at a loss to know what your Majesty is talking about."

He flushed with anger for a moment, and then he burst out laughing.

"Very good, Brigadier!" he cried. "I begin to believe that you are as good a diplomatist as you are a soldier, and I cannot say more than that."

So that was my strange adventure in which I found myself the friend and confident agent of the Emperor. When he returned from Elba he refrained from digging up the

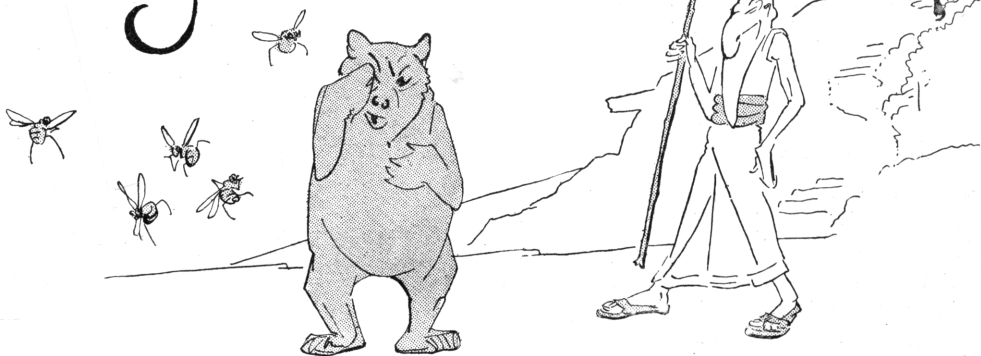
papers until his position should be secure, and they still remained in the corner of the old pigeon-house after his exile to St. Helena. It was at this time that he was desirous of getting them into the hands of his own supporters, and for that purpose he wrote me, as I afterwards learned, three letters, all of which were intercepted by his guardians. Finally, he offered to support himself and his own establishment—which he might very easily have done out of the gigantic sum which belonged to him—if they would only pass one of his letters unopened. This request was refused, and so, up to his death in '21, the papers still remained where I have told you. How they came to be dug up by Count Bertrand and myself, and who eventually obtained them, is a story which I would tell you, were it not that the end has not yet come.

Some day you will hear of those papers and you will see how, after he has been so long in his grave, that great man can still set Europe shaking. When that day comes, you will think of Etienne Gerard, and you will tell your children that you have heard the story from the lips of the man who was the only one living of all who took part in that strange history—the man who was tempted by Marshal Berthier, who led that wild pursuit upon the Paris road, who was honoured by the embrace of the Emperor, and who rode with him by moonlight in the Forest of Fontainebleau. The buds are bursting and the birds are calling, my friends. You may find better things to do in the sunlight than listening to the stories of an old, broken soldier. And yet you may well treasure what I say, for the buds will have burst and the birds sung in many seasons before France will see such another ruler as he whose servants we were proud to be.

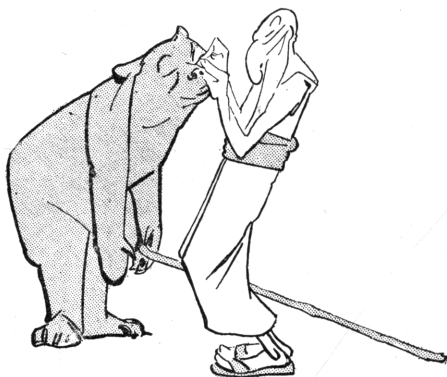
Illustrated
by
J. A. Shepherd

Fables

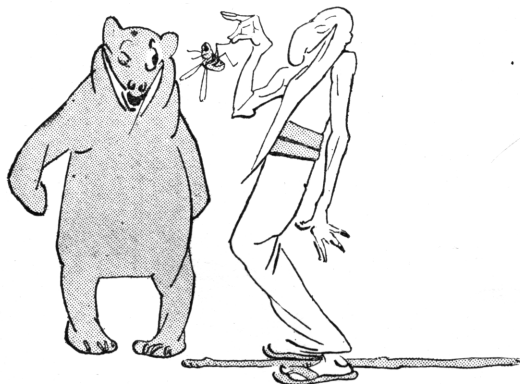
THE HERMIT AND THE BEAR.



1.—A CERTAIN HERMIT—



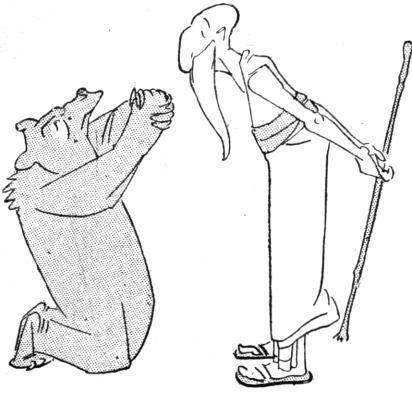
2.—HAVING DONE A GOOD OFFICE TO A BEAR—



3.—AND RELIEVED HIM FROM PAIN—



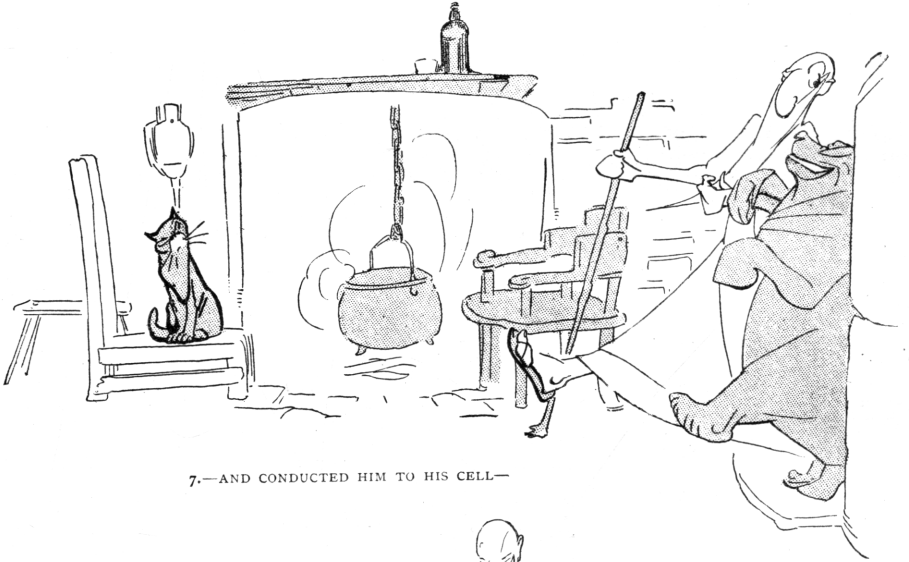
4.—THE GRATEFUL CREATURE WAS SO
SENSIBLE OF HIS OBLIGATION—



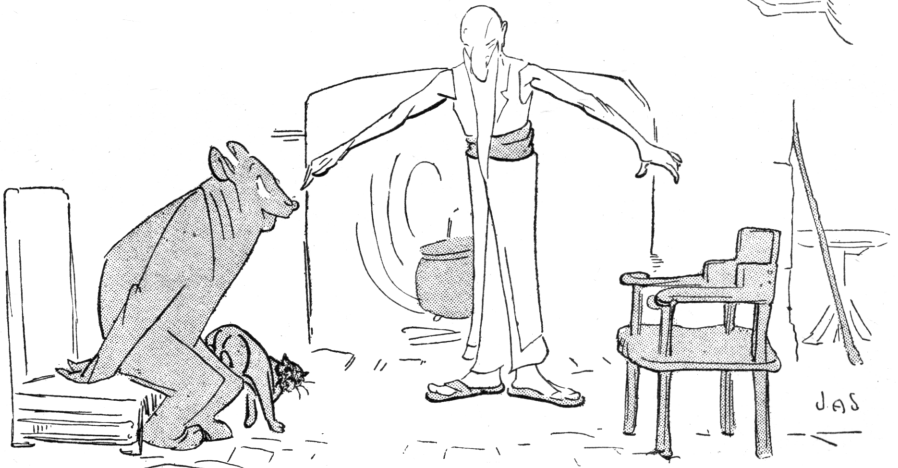
5.—THAT HE BEGGED TO BE ADMITTED AS THE GUARDIAN
AND COMPANION OF HIS SOLITUDE.



6.—THE HERMIT WILLINGLY ACCEPTED HIS OFFER—

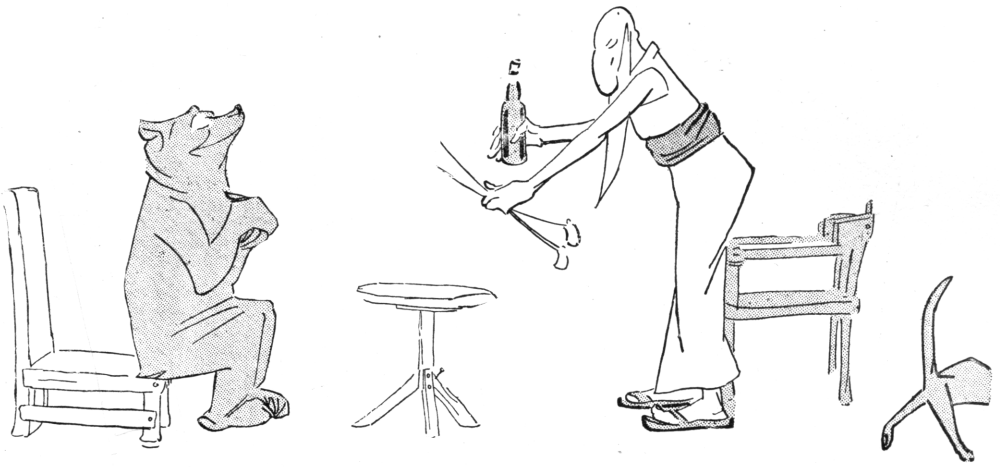


7.—AND CONDUCTED HIM TO HIS CELL—

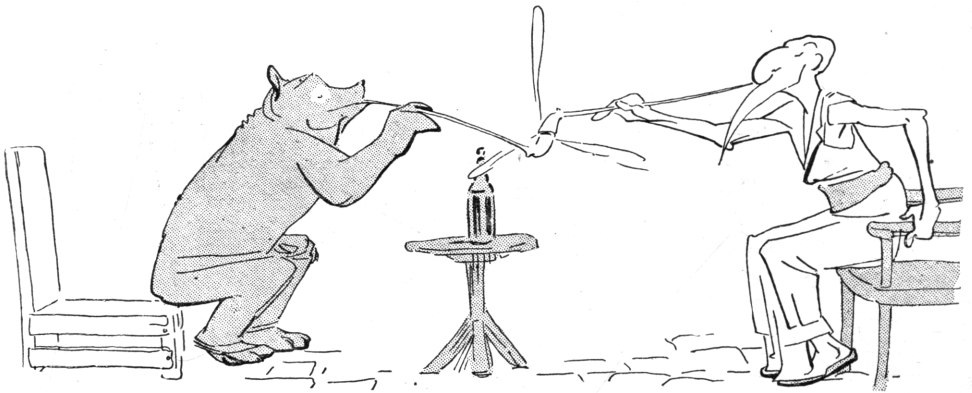


8.—WHERE HE TREATED HIM WITH HOSPITALITY—

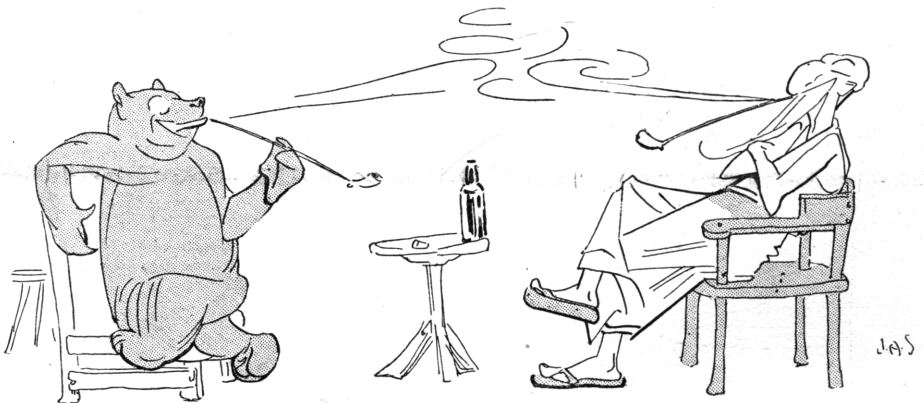
JAS



9.—AND THEY PASSED THEIR TIME—

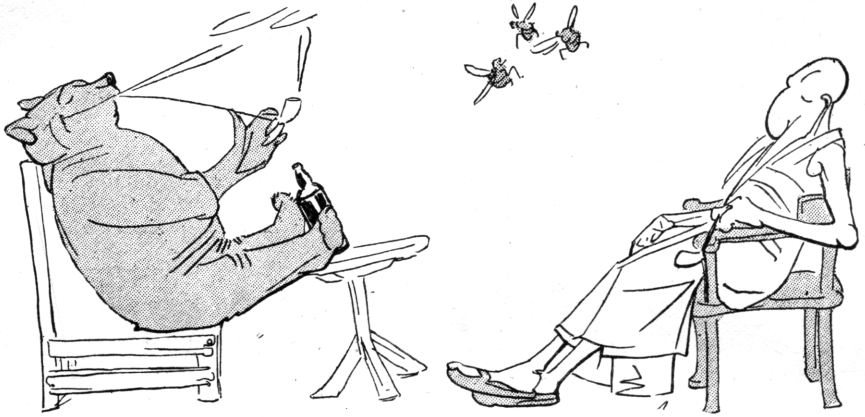


10.—WITH PIPES AND GROG—



11.—IN A MOST AMICABLE MANNER.

JAS



12.—THE DAY BEING VERY HOT, THE HERMIT FELL ASLEEP.



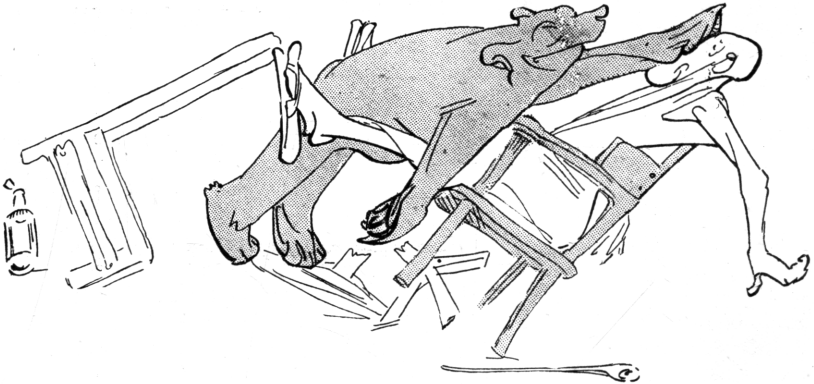
13.—THE OFFICIOUS BEAR EMPLOYED HIMSELF IN DRIVING AWAY THE FLIES FROM HIS PATRON'S FACE.



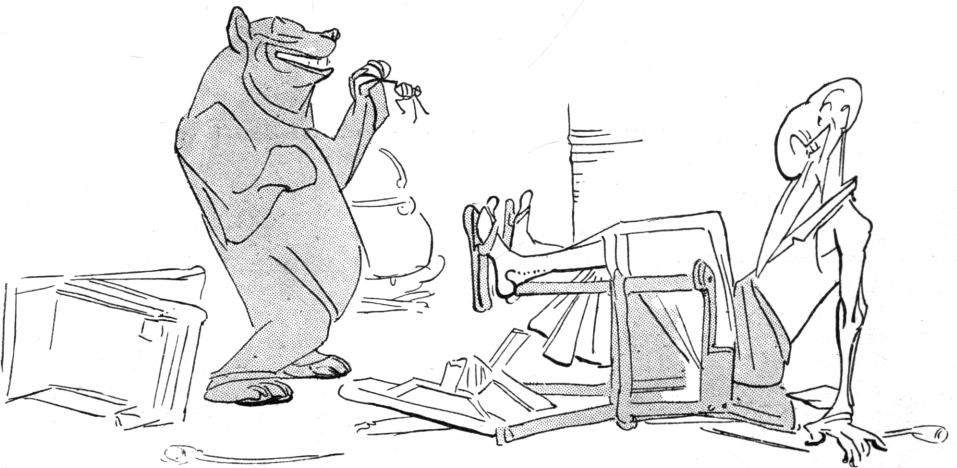
14.—BUT, IN SPITE OF ALL HIS CARE, ONE OF THE FLIES PERPETUALLY RETURNED TO THE ATTACK, AND SETTLED ON THE HERMIT'S NOSE.



15.—“NOW I SHALL HAVE YOU, MOST CERTAINLY,” SAID THE BEAR—



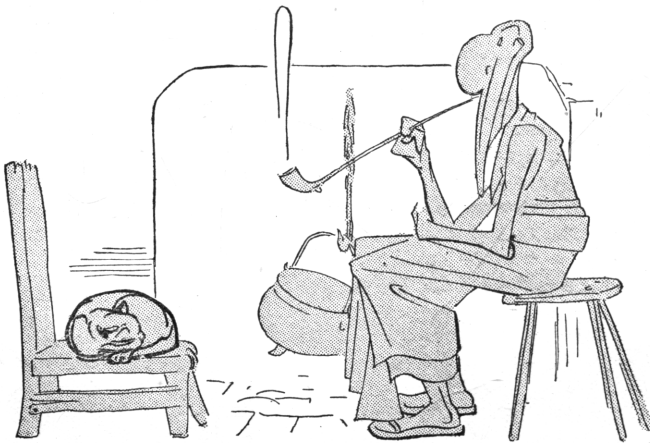
16.—AND, WITH THE BEST INTENTIONS IMAGINABLE, GAVE THE HERMIT A VIOLENT BLOW ON THE FACE—



17.—WHICH EFFECTUALLY DEMOLISHED THE FLY, BUT AT THE SAME TIME TERRIBLY BRUISED HIS BENEFactor.
Vol. x.—45.

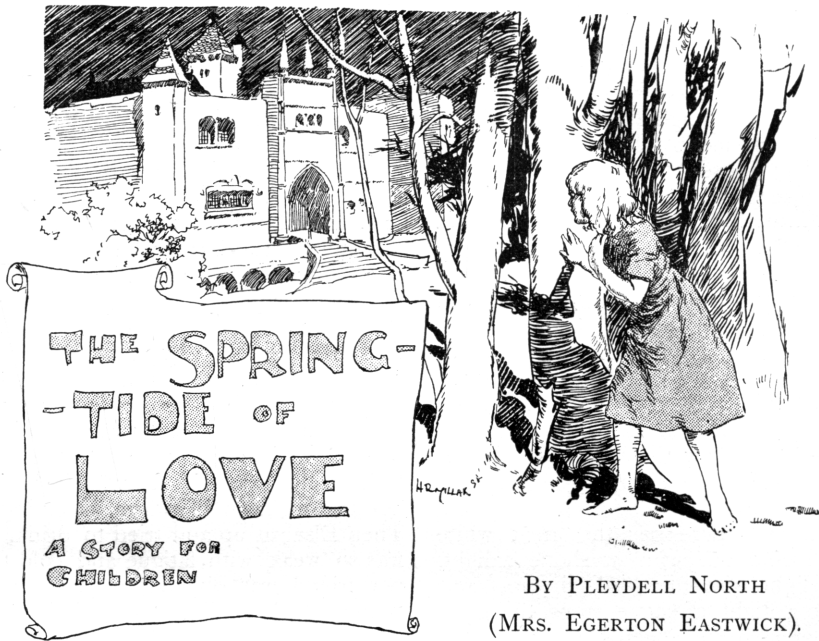


18.—THE HERMIT'S ANGER WAS TOO GREAT FOR WORDS.



J. A. Shepherd

MORAL.—AN IMPRUDENT FRIEND OFTEN DOES AS MUCH MISCHIEF BY HIS TOO GREAT ZEAL AS THE WORST ENEMY COULD EFFECT BY HIS MALICE.



BY PLEYDELL NORTH
(MRS. EGERTON EASTWICK).



HE mists of the early twilight were falling, and Elsa, the little girl who lived at the woodman's cottage, was still far from home. She had wandered out in the spring sunshine in search of the bluebells and wild anemones with which the wood abounded, for the child loved the company of the birds and flowers better than the rough play of the boys who were called her brothers.

The woodman and his wife said she was strange and dreamy, full of curious fancies which they found it hard to understand; but, then, they were not Elsa's real parents, which might account for their difficulty. They were kind to her, however, in their fashion, and Elsa always tried to remember to obey them; but sometimes she forgot. She had forgotten to-day—for although the good wife had told her to remain near the cottage, the eagerness of her search for the flowers she loved had led her farther into the wood than she had ever been before.

The sunlight disappeared, and the darkness seemed to come quite suddenly under the thick branches of the trees; the birds had chanted their last evening song and gone to their nests—only a solitary thrush sang loudly just overhead; Elsa thought it was warning her to hurry homewards. She turned quickly, taking as she thought the direction of the cottage; but as she was barely seven years old, and felt a little frightened, it is not

surprising that she only plunged deeper into the wood.

Now she found herself in the midst of a great silence; the beautiful tracery of young green leaves through which she had hitherto caught glimpses of the sky had disappeared, and over her head stretched only bare brown branches, between which she saw the shining stars, clear as on a frosty winter's night. The stars looked friendly, and she was glad to see them, but it was growing dreadfully cold. The plucked flowers withered and fell from her poor little numbed hands, and she shivered in her thin cotton frock.

Ah! what would she not have given for a sight of the open door and the fire in the woodman's cottage, and a basin of warm bread and milk, even though it was given with a scolding from the woodman's wife? She struggled on, with her poor little tired feet, for it seemed to her that the wood was growing thinner—perhaps there might be a house hereabouts.

But, oh! how terribly cold. Now there was frost upon the ground at her feet, frost upon dead leaves and blades of grass, frost upon the bare tree branches. The moon had risen, and she could see that all the world around her was white and chill and dead. Surely she had wandered back into the cruel bitter winter, frost-bound and hard.

It was strange that she had strength to go on, but she looked up at the stars, and thought that they were guiding her. At

length she came to the border of the wood, and there stretched before her a wide, open space, with only a few trees scattered here and there, and through an opening of the trees the cold moon shone down upon a white, silent house.

The house looked as dead and winter-bound as everything else ; but still it *was* a house, and Elsa said to herself that surely someone must live in it. So she thanked the friendly stars for leading her aright, and with what remaining strength she had, dragged her poor little numbed feet up the broad path or road between the trees. At the end of the road an iron gate hung open upon its hinges, and Elsa found herself in what once had been a garden. Now the lawns and flower-beds were all alike one blinding sheet of ice and frozen snow.

But, oh, joy ! there was the great white house, and from one window shone a light, surely the light of a fire. All the rest was dark. Up a flight of stone steps the child dragged her weary feet, across a terrace that had surely once been gay with flowers, until she stood before a huge door, brown and black, except where the frost gleamed, closed and barred with iron bars. The great knocker hung high above her reach ; but with her poor little hands she beat against the woodwork. Surely, if someone did not let her in soon, she must fall down there and sleep and die upon the step. But at the sound of her faint knocking there came from within the deep baying of a hound, and Elsa was terrified anew, but could not run away ; then in a few moments a heavy bar seemed to be withdrawn and the great door opened slowly.

A tall man stood within—a man in the dress of a hunter, pale-faced in the moonlight, but strong and powerful, and wearing a long dark beard that reached almost to his waist. His was a figure to fill any child with fear, but Elsa saw only the scene behind him. A great blazing wood fire upon an open hearth, with rugs in front of it upon which were stretched two large hounds ; a third, shaking himself slowly, had followed his master to the door. Elsa stretched out her little hands to the blazing warmth, with the cry of a perishing child.

"Take me in—oh ! take me in !" she pleaded. "Please let me come in !"

She ran forward. Then, with a strange hoarse sound, that she did

not understand, the man stooped and lifted her in his arms, and carried her forward and laid her gently down upon the rugs in the grateful warmth, and the hounds sniffed round her and seemed well pleased, and ready to welcome her—and— for a little while she remembered no more.

When Elsa came to herself (she thought she must have been asleep, but the waking was a little strange and difficult) she found that she was propped up among soft cushions still upon the rugs ; the dogs now lay at a respectful distance, each with his forepaws stretched out and his nose held between them, while with gleaming eyes he watched with keenest interest all that was going on.

The rough-looking man with the long, dark beard and the pale face knelt beside her, holding a basin of warm, steaming broth. Then Elsa sat up and tried to drink, but she was so weak with fatigue and cold that her new friend was obliged to feed her with a spoon, which he did rather awkwardly. After she had swallowed the broth, the warm blood flowed once more freely through her veins, and she sank into a deep, sweet sleep, her little head falling serenely against the stranger's breast and her hair spreading



"HER NEW FRIEND WAS OBLIGED TO FEED HER."

out in golden waves over the arm that held her.

When Elsa once more opened her eyes, the cold grey light of morning fell through the uncurtained windows into the hall. She found herself lying on a couch covered with rugs of warm fur, at the side of the hearth, where logs of pine wood, newly kindled, leapt and blazed, filling the air with sweet, pungent odours.

For a while she was bewildered, wondering how she came to be there, instead of in her little room at the woodman's cottage. Then she saw her friend of the night before kneeling in front of the fire, evidently preparing food, while the dogs, grouped around, sat on their haunches with ears erect, keen and observant, watching his movements. Then Elsa remembered; and she clapped her hands with a merry laugh, the laugh of a happy, waking child. The man kneeling by the fire started at the sound, and then turned his grave face towards her with a wistful expression strange to see.

"I want to get up," said Elsa, promptly. "If you please, I can wash and dress myself; I've been taught how."

"Wait a few minutes, little lady, then you shall have all you want."

The voice sounded strangely, and the man seemed listening to its tones as though surprised to hear himself speak. But the rough, halting accents seemed less out of keeping with the old house than Elsa's laugh. The dogs came and licked her hands, and she played with them until the man rose from his place before the fire, and lifting her up bade her come with him.

He led her to a small room off the hall, which was indeed curious in its arrangements. A toilet-table stood there with most costly fittings; brushes with silver and ivory handles were lying upon the faded silk; a little pair of satin shoes had been thrown carelessly upon the floor; a cloak of crimson satin was flung over a chair. All these things looked as though a hand had cast them aside but yesterday—yet all were faded and soiled, and the dust lay thick as though that yesterday had been many years ago.

And among these relics of an unknown past the child made her simple toilet. She had never seen such magnificence, or felt, she thought, so sad. But when she returned

to the hall ten minutes later, the sadness was forgotten.

She looked a quaint little figure, indeed, clad in a silken wrapper provided by her host, which trailed far behind on the ground, greatly to her delight; her little feet were cased in dainty slippers which, small as they were, yet were many sizes too large. In spite



"SHE LOOKED A QUAIN'T LITTLE FIGURE."

of misfits, however, she contrived to walk with a stately grandeur quite amazing to behold, until the dogs jumped and fawned upon her, when she forgot her finery in a game of play and lost her slippers in the rug.

On the table, a breakfast was rudely spread: cold meats for the master of the house, who fed his dogs from his own plate, while for Elsa was provided a bowl of goat's milk and some crisp cakes, which she thought delicious.

When the meal was over, Elsa pleaded to be allowed to do for her new friend the household duties she had been taught to fulfil by the woodman's wife; and soon, with the wrapper deftly pinned about her waist, and the silken sleeves tucked up from bare and dimpled arms, she stood before a bowl of steaming water, washing plates and dishes.

Only the table was rather high, and she was forced to stand upon a stool.

From that day a strange new life began for little Elsa.

The rough-looking man who had given her shelter seemed to be living quite alone with his dogs. Every morning he went out with them and his gun, apparently to hunt and shoot in the forest, for he usually returned laden with game, which served to keep the larder stocked.

Of other kinds of provisions there seemed to be a plentiful supply on the premises; the granaries were well stocked with corn, which the master ground himself, while some goats tethered in the outhouses gave a sufficient quantity of milk for the daily needs of the little household.

Of Elsa's return to the woodman's cottage there seemed to be no question. She was terrified at the thought of being again lost in the wood, and pleaded hard to remain with her new friend, who, on his side, was equally loth to part with her.

Soon, having learned many useful ways from the woodman's wife, she became a clever little housekeeper, and could make a good stew, while Ulric, as the master of the house bade her call him, was out with his dogs in the forest, though now only two of the hounds accompanied him in his expeditions; one was always left as Elsa's companion and guardian. Then, too, she could milk and feed the goats, and keep the house-place clean and tidy. But all the day was not given to such work as this.

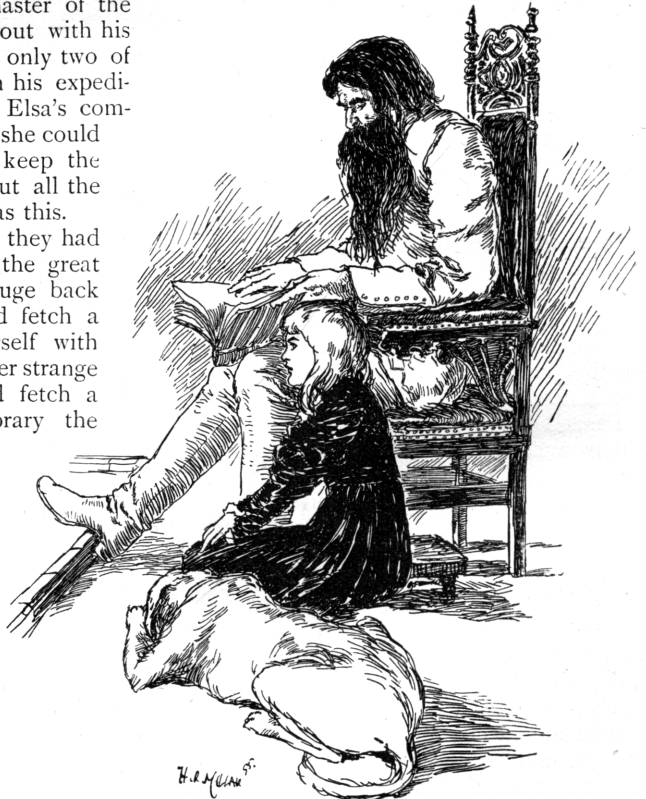
When Ulric had returned, and they had dined together, he would bring the great carved wooden chair with the huge back up to the fire—and Elsa would fetch a stool to his side and busy herself with needle and thread, while he told her strange stories; or sometimes he would fetch a ponderous volume from a library the house contained and read, either to himself or aloud to her, such things as she could understand.

Now, if you wonder where Elsa found the needle and thread which I have mentioned, I must tell you that Ulric had given her a little work-basket neatly fitted, but the silk lining of which was much faded, and some of the needles were rusty. There was in it also a golden thimble, which Elsa found a little too large.

And as for the clothes she worked at, one day he brought her a quantity of beautiful garments, some of silk and satin, and some of fine cloth, and in these, having nothing of her own but her one poor little cotton frock, the child managed to dress herself, till she looked like a quaint little fairy princess. Her stitches were awkward and badly done at first, but as time went on, instinct helped her small knowledge, and she grew handy with her needle.

When she was cooking and feeding the goats, she wore a woollen petticoat and an apron, a costume more suited to the occasion.

In the evenings Ulric taught her many things; to read and to write, and even to speak in strange languages, so that her education was by no means neglected. He let her wander over the great mansion where she would, and showed her many of the rooms himself. All bore signs of having been used quite recently, and yet a long time ago. Dust was thick everywhere, and soon Elsa grew to understand that the dust must remain and accumulate; no hand was to be allowed to touch anything in that strange,



"HE WOULD READ ALOUD TO HER."

silent house beyond the hall and the little room which Ulric had arranged for her sleeping apartment. One part of the mansion, however, she never penetrated. At the end of a long passage hung a heavy velvet curtain, and behind this was a door, always securely locked. Only Ulric passed beyond it, at stated times, and when he returned from these visits he was more than usually sad for many hours.

The weeks slipped into months, and Elsa dwelt on in this strange home. Every day at first she looked eagerly for the breaking of the frost—for the promise of the sunshine and flowers she had left behind her in the wood. But the spring never came. The bitter cold and the frost continued, and in time the child's heart must have frozen too, but for the strong, warm love which had sprung up within it for Ulric.

Old and thoughtful she grew, beyond her years, but never unhappy. Ulric needed her, was glad of her presence; she could minister to his wants and brighten his sad life.

So Ulric's love grew more to her than the flowers and sunshine of the outer world; to think of leaving him now would break her heart, but she wondered often over the mystery that shadowed his life and hers. And the months grew to years, and Elsa was twelve years old.

Then one evening Ulric came in from one of his visits to the closed chamber, more sad and thoughtful even than usual, and taking Elsa's hand in his, bade her sit beside him for a little while and put aside her work. She came obediently, looking anxiously into his face.

"Little Elsa," he said, "I have counted the time, and it is now five years since you came to me. You told me then you were seven years old, now you are therefore twelve, and will soon be growing into a maiden. The time has come——"

Instinctively the child clasped his hand closer.

"Not to part us, father?" (for so she had learned to call him).

"That, my child, must rest with you."

"Then it is soon settled," said Elsa, trying to laugh, "for I will never leave you."

Something like the light of hope shone in the man's clouded eyes—eyes in which Elsa had never seen a smile, although his lips had smiled at her often.

"Listen," he said; "before you speak rash words, I must tell you all. Then you shall decide.

"It is a little more than eleven years since

the curse fell upon me. I was a hard man then, Elsa—hard and cruel and strong—it was my boast that I never forgave a debt, or pardoned an enemy.

"I had married a young and beautiful wife, and her I loved, passionately, but in my own hard and selfish fashion. Often I refused to heed even her gentle pleadings for the suffering, the sinful, and the poor. And we had one child—a girl—then only a few months old.

"It was a New Year's Eve that I decided upon giving a great entertainment to all the country round. I did it for my own glorification. Among the rich I was disliked, but tolerated on account of my position; by the poor far and wide I was feared and hated.

"Everyone invited came to my ball. My wife looked exquisitely lovely, more lovely I thought than on our bridal day—everything ministered to my pride and satisfaction.

"We had mustered here, here in this hall, to drink the health of the dying year and welcome the incoming of the new, when above the sounds of laughter and good cheer was heard from without a pitiful, feeble wail—the wail of a child in pain. That feeble cry rang then above every other sound—it rings in my heart still.

"Before I could interfere, my wife, with her own hands, had flung wide the great barred door, and I saw a sight which I alone could explain.

"Upon the step was huddled a woman, with a child in her arms. A man, gaunt and hunger-stricken, towered behind her in the darkness; two other children clung to her, shivering and weeping. We were in the midst of the cruel, bitter winter; the earth was frost-bound, hard and cold, even as now. That day I had given orders that these people, poor and starving as they were, should be turned from their home. The man I had suspected of being a poacher, and he was doing no work—a good-for-nothing—but *she*, my wife, had pleaded for them that I would wait, at least, until the summer. Now she bent down to that poor creature on the step, who was striving to nurse and warm her babe in her chill arms, and whispered something—I guessed it was a promise of shelter.

"In my fierce pride and anger I laid my hand upon her arm, and with a strong grip drew her back—then without a word I closed the door and barred it. But within there was no more laughter. A voice rose upon the still night air—the sound of a bitter curse—a curse that should rest upon me and

mine, the chill of winter and of death, of pitiless desolation and remorse, until human love should win me back to human pity and God's forgiveness.

"One by one, with cold good-nights, my guests departed. My wife stole away to her own apartments without a word; upon her arm I saw the mark of my cruel hand.

"In the morning the curse had fallen. The woman I had turned away had been found at my gates, dead, her child still clasped to her breast.

"The servants fled and left me alone, taking with them our child; my wife—that night—she, too—died—to me."

The man's head drooped upon his hands. For a moment there was silence in the hall.

Elsa stood—her child's heart grieved at the terrible story, her whole nature sorrowing, pitiful, shocked.

Presently Ulric recovered himself and continued: "Now, Elsa, you know all. My child, if you will return to the world and leave me to work out my fate, you shall not go penniless. I have wealth. For your sake I will venture once more among the haunts of men and see you placed in a safe home, then—I will try to forget. It is right that you should shrink."

"Father, dear father, I love you—you are sorry—I will not leave you—do not send me away."

A look almost of rapture changed the worn and tear-stained face of the man who had owned his sin—and the child's arms closed once more around his neck, and her golden head nestled to his breast. A few minutes later he led her to the closed chamber. Together they passed beyond it, and Elsa found herself standing in a richly furnished room.

Near a window was a couch covered with dark velvet, and upon the couch a figure lay stretched as if in quiet, death-like sleep, or carved in marble. The figure was that of a young and very fair woman. Her dress of white satin had yellowed with time; her hands were clasped upon her breast as though



"MOTHER, AWAKE!" SHE SAID.

in prayer; her golden hair lay unbound upon the pillow.

"It is fitting now," said Ulric, "that you should come here."

Softly Elsa advanced. She stood beside the couch, gazing down upon the still, white face, so sweet in its settled grief, but which in this long silence seemed to have lost its first youth. Elsa bent lower, lower. What new instinct filled her warm, young heart, and made her speak?

"Mother, awake!" she said. "Mother!" and kissed the cold, quiet lips.

Was it a ray of sunlight that stole through the open window and trembled upon the mouth, curving it into a smile? Slowly the dark eyes opened, and rested with a look of ineffable love upon Elsa's face.

And so the curse and the shadows of eternal winter passed away from the house of Ulric, and his young bride came back from her long slumber. In due time the garden, too, awoke to the touch of spring, and the flowers bloomed, and the birds mated once more and sang in budding trees, and the sun shone. And Elsa's love bound closely together the hearts of her father and mother; for perhaps you have been clever enough to find out that the woodman's wife was the nurse who had carried away with her in her flight Ulric's little daughter on the night of the New Year's ball.